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LITERARY PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

by

Dallas B. Boggs

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of**

Doctor of Education

University of San Diego

1990

Dissertation Committee

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ABSTRACT

Literary Perceptions of Leadership

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The purpose of this study has been to seek out an active and influential pattern of human leadership in the pages of Western literature. Literature is a mirror of human perception and thought. It is a reflection of ideas, a means of transcribing not events as they have taken place, nor of human commentary of actual deeds, but of ideas and aspirations. As such, literature may be a more accurate reflection of the human mind than history or even philosophy. Therefore, if we are to acquire an understanding of this elusive concept of leadership, it is necessary that we first arrive at a reasonable understanding of the ways in which leaders and their deeds have been represented in human letters over the centuries.

The study has focused on nine major fictional works from the pages of Western literature encompassing a chronological period which begins in Homeric Greece and ends in mid-twentieth century. It has been, for the most part, a study of relationships: between leaders and their followers; between leaders and their gods; and between leaders and heroes. Throughout, the study has attempted to determine whether or not there has been a conscious, coherent idea of leadership as a concept.

Among the conclusions drawn are the following: (1) While the substance of leadership has not significantly changed in the course of 3000 years of Western literature, the leadership process has changed appreciably; (2) There are a number of points of commonalty held by effective leaders from ancient Greece to modern America; (3) The differences between leaders and heroes are greater than their similarities; (4) Writers of Western literature did not appear to be conscious of a concept of leadership prior to the 20th century.

DEDICATION

There is a character in Greek mythology named Antaeus. Antaeus was the son of the great sea god, Poseidon, but it was from his mother, Ge, the earth goddess, that he gained his strength and sustenance. One time the hero, Hercules, tried to kill Antaeus in a wrestling match. But each time Antaeus was thrown to the ground, he arose stronger than ever because of his contact with his mother, the earth. Hercules was finally able to defeat Antaeus by holding him high in the air, thus depriving him of the source of his strength.

Throughout the course of these doctoral studies it has been my great fortune never to have been denied access to the source of my strength, my friends in the Leadership program at the University of San Diego. It is to all of those friends that I dedicate this study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the three members of my committee, my friends Joe Rost, Mary Scherr and Lee Gerlach, and to thank them for their great help and for their patience.

Most of all, I wish to thank my special gadfly, Mary Powers, without whose consistent support and not always subtle urging I would doubtless have abandoned this project long ago and run off to Ibiza.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE STUDY

And when we think we lead we are the most led.

Lord Byron
The Two Foscari

Introduction

The practice of leadership is an art form. It is an art form just as surely as the writing of good literature and the proper application of oil to canvas are art forms. The validity of this statement can be substantiated by at least two major arguments. First, the nature of true leadership is a chimera, extremely difficult to identify with any consensus. To pin it down at all is a subjective business involving elements of such diffuse frameworks as psychology, sociology, mythology, political science, philosophy, and theology. The search for a stable definition yields a confusing multitude of propositions, many of which are helpful, none of which is entirely satisfactory. Yet, as the definition of leadership remains elusive, its successful practice, though identifiable, becomes particularly difficult because it is dependent upon

so many variables, most of which deal in one way or another with human nature, and many of which lie beyond the control of the would-be leader.

Second, the kind of leadership which was effective 3000 years ago remains as meaningful and as worthy of study and evaluation as any form of leadership practiced today. Management is a science, similar to chemistry and engineering; it can be significantly altered over time. People are better managers today than they were fifty or a hundred years ago because of computers and seminars and because of at least some percentage of the countless books that have been written about management techniques. Like all sciences, management is quantifiable within certain limits. It can grow and improve; it can alter in structure commensurate with the accumulation of collective knowledge in the field. But leadership is different. It is subject to an infinite array of variations, but its basic structure ultimately boils down to the simple effectiveness of the relationship among leaders and followers.

This is not to say that leadership should not be studied nor that it cannot be taught. We know more about art and literature because we have directed an enormous amount of energy to their study. Art form or not, leadership cannot be practiced in a vacuum. Neither you nor I may ever be as good a leader as, say, the Emperor Hadrian, but we may become better than we are by studying his methods. If we are to know more about leaders and

leadership, if society is to produce more effective leaders in the future and cultivate a nation--a world--of followers capable of being led in some effective direction, then leadership must continually be studied and refined.

In order to undertake a serious study of leadership, it is important to have an understanding of how relevant the idea has been to the human experience. To be sure, there have been leaders throughout the course of history, but what have been people's perceptions of their leaders? Has there been, in the process of human experience, a consciousness of transformational leadership which would approach the definition set down by James MacGregor Burns (1978)? Has there been, for that matter, a valid consciousness of leadership at all prior to our twentieth century studies of the subject?

It has been the challenge of this research to seek answers to these questions, and in order to do so I have chosen to examine Western literature. Literature is a mirror of perception and thought. It is a reflection of ideas, a means of transcribing not events as they have taken place, nor of commentary on actual deeds, but of ideas and aspirations. As such, literature may be a more accurate reflection of the human mind than history or even of philosophy. Therefore, if we are to have an understanding of this elusive concept of leadership, we must first acquire a reasonable understanding of the way in

which leaders and their deeds have been represented in human letters over the centuries.

The intent of this investigation is to examine the perceptions of leadership as expressed in literature, beginning with the classical period and extending into relatively contemporary letters. I have not addressed in the study historical or any other nonfictional works, but have confined the research to fiction, poetry, and drama, traversing a very wide spectrum of Western literature.

Focus of The Study

I have divided the research into four major literary periods and selected two representative works from each period (the classical period is represented by three). A chapter has been devoted to each of these four periods. The four periods and their representative works are as follows:

The Classical Period: The Iliad of Homer (1971), The Odyssey of Homer (1963) and Sophocles' Antigone (1971).

The Medieval Period: Beowulf (Garmonsway, 1968) and Le Mort D'Arthur by Sir Thomas Malory (1986).

The Renaissance Period: Shakespeare's Coriolanus (1957) and Henry V (1961).

The Modern Period: Herman Melville's Billy Budd, Sailor (1962) and Herman Hesse's The Glass Bead Game (1970).

These works are far from fully definitive. They are simply my choices from the vast compendium of human creativity. The reasons for their selection are at once personal, subjective, and somewhat subtle; best explained in the chapters wherein they are discussed at length. The assumption is that a thorough examination of these works will yield a connective thread to support the supposition that a conscious idea of leadership has always held a place in the thought processes of educated human beings. There is a virtually endless list of works upon which this study might have been based; these nine works were selected primarily because each is a classic representative of its respective literary era. If, indeed, their study yields legitimate examples of the conscious, intended practice of leadership, my premise will have been supported.

Statement of the Problem

If leaders have appeared periodically throughout history to alter the course of human history, were these instances of leadership simply coincidental, an outgrowth of the times, a serendipitous blending of genetics, environment, and contemporary politics? Or has there been within the patterns of human thought a real and conscious idea of leadership, active and influential, if not coherently defined? The most cursory study of Western civilization will yield a pattern of leaders and followers.

The pages of history are filled with accounts of wars, migrations, civil strife, the creation (and destruction) of political hierarchies, all representative of an enormous expenditure of human energy. Undoubtedly a large measure of this energy was not entirely random, but was channeled and focused by individual leaders toward the accomplishment of specific personal or communal goals. From tribal villages to great empires, the story of human history has been essentially that of the interplay among leaders and followers. This is fairly clear. What is not so clear is whether or not there has been a conscious, coherent idea of leadership in the pages of Western literature.

The intent at the onset of research was to seek a conscious thread of leadership beginning with the classical writers and extending into contemporary letters. The idea was to establish an acceptable set of standards, a working definition, so to speak, based on Burns (1978) and his antecedents, and then loosely to judge selected fictional leaders against those standards.

Burns, a political scientist by profession, examined real historical figures as examples of transformational leaders, and interpreted their actions in accordance with his own fairly subjective standards. In other words, he did not simply construct a definition and then judge his historical examples according to their ability to fit that specific definition. Rather, he looked at the lives of his exemplars and formed his definition in concert with the

patterns of those lives. The design of this process was cyclical. That is, Burns' ideas on transformational leadership seem to have been derived from his study of historical leaders, then shaped and refined until they became the criteria upon which to determine the selection of other transformational leaders.

The problem, as I originally perceived it, was a fairly simple one. All that I had to do was to reiterate and, perhaps, embellish the Burnsian definition of transformational leadership and then examine, in turn, my selected protagonists: Achilles, Odysseus, Antigone, Beowulf, King Arthur, Henry V, Coriolanus, Joseph Knecht, and Captain Edward Vere in relation to the established criteria. It could, I reasoned, almost be a quantitative exercise, simply set forth a list of standards and measure each character's transformational leadership "quotient" in accordance with the degree to which his or her personal leadership qualities met those standards.

This rather simplified approach became quickly unmanageable when initial research began to suggest the likelihood that the idea of transformational leadership-- leadership with fundamental moral, ethical, and spiritual elements--is a distinctly twentieth century construct. In fact, leadership, to the extent that it was thought about at all in pretwentieth century literature, is quite often depicted in negative terms, that is, the oppressive state

versus the solitary hero, with the leader inevitably portrayed as a symbol of the state.

So, like that of Burns, my own research design has taken on a cyclical pattern. Early on I abandoned attempts to shoehorn fictional leaders into a box labeled "transformational leadership," and, instead, have sought to examine the changing nature of leadership over the centuries as depicted in human letters. Joseph Campbell (1973), in his splendid study of symbolism in religion and mythology, speaks of the Hero with a Thousand Faces. The leader, too, has a thousand faces, some of them portray a nobility of purpose, some a conscious and sometime selfish manipulation of followers. None of them are understood with complete clarity. The problem of this research has been to seek out these faces in an effort to pursue the shifting yet peculiarly constant definition of leadership, and to place the idea of leadership, itself, in a cogent perspective.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to seek out in the pages of Western literature an active and influential pattern of human leadership. In the process of this search, it is my intention to achieve at least five major objectives described herein.

First, I wish to determine whether or not the writers of Western literature were aware of a concept of leadership; an idea, a discipline to be studied and observed. The effective accomplishment of this objective will require a fairly subtle handling of historical perspective. For example, a 20th century student of leadership, reading Le Mort d'Arthur would instantly recognize King Arthur's vision of a perfect kingdom and his desire to purge his knights of their thirst for self-aggrandizement as definite aspects of the process of leadership. But did Sir Thomas Malory have any intention of writing about leadership or any awareness that he had done so? With that question in mind, I wish to find out if leadership is a timeless and universal concept or if it is, rather, a purely 20th century construct with which we have, in retrospect, labeled both real and fictional personalities of the past.

Second, I would like to see if there are any points of commonalty among fictional leaders over the centuries. Is it possible, for example, for the leader of a city state in 4th century Greece to have the same strengths and weaknesses as the captain of a 17th century British man-of-war? Are there, as well, particular societal conditions which lend themselves to the emergence of great leaders? Do fictional leaders, for example, flourish in time of conflict as historical leaders seem to do? And what about people in relation to their gods? Is leadership born in

times and situations when the gods are perceived as being powerful or when they are weak and lacking in influence? In other words, are there universal situations in which leadership is likely to develop and are there universal characteristics by which we may identify leaders and potential leaders?

Third, I will attempt to distinguish between heroism and leadership. There are heroes in evidence throughout the chronicles of Western literature. Most of them, Achilles, Lancelot, Hercules to name a few, are loners, individual actors seeking individual glory. Are there differences between these sorts of protagonists and true leaders? If so, what are they? And, even more importantly, were the authors who created these characters aware of a distinction between the hero and leader?

Fourth, I intend to trace the character development of the selected protagonists. The story of Beowulf, for example, traces the life of its protagonist from youth to old age. Does Beowulf mature? And in the maturation process, is there a development of his leadership skills? Is there a growth of leader/follower relationships or does he merely practice singular heroism throughout his life? Do any of the works contain examples of leadership at various levels of the social hierarchy? Is there evidence of mentoring?

Finally, if there is a pattern of leadership in Western literature, does the practice of leadership appear

to improve and develop over time? Or am I correct in the premise stated in the first line of this chapter; is leadership an art form which has not significantly improved over the centuries? In short, is the pattern of the development of leadership linear or cyclical?

Definitions

This is a study of relationships and perspectives. It involves, therefore, a number of comparative observations which, if they are to have any coherence, must be preceded by a few basic definitions. In this section, therefore, I will attempt to set down the definition of key elements of the study in order to provide a common basis for comparison. It must be understood that the elusive concept of leadership, particularly when viewed from the perspective of 3,000 years of Western thought, does not easily lend itself to set, compact definitions. This 20th century definition of leadership will, therefore, be constantly re-examined throughout the course of this study in light of the actions of the literary protagonists and their relationships with their followers.

Leadership

Leadership is, first of all, a relationship among a leader and his or her followers. Ideally, it is an interactive process which involves the two-way flow of

information on such interrelated areas as shared aspirations and vision, as well as the expressed wants, needs, and fears of the followers. However, in those instances wherein the followers have not achieved a mandate for self-expression, leadership may take the form of a relationship wherein a benevolent and moral leader interprets the needs of the followers for them and establishes the course of society based on his or her own vision and founded in his or her compassion for those followers.

The leadership process is something which emerges in extraordinary times, times of crisis and of conflict. It often involves the sort of revolutionary change necessary to create a new order out of the old, but it may just as easily involve holding together the fabric of a society in the face of external hostility or internal corruption. Most often, it is a process earmarked by emotion and by singular or mutual passion.

Leadership is not restricted to the relationship among one leader at the top of an organization and some number of followers beneath. It is, rather, a process that can take place simultaneously at varying strata of an organization. Moreover, leadership is a process which can take place with different levels of intensity. Certainly, leadership can be a revolutionary process for effecting radical change. It can also, however, manifest itself in the kinds of small, courageous, often unpopular acts which are

frequently necessary for the preservation of the fabric of human society and of human dignity.

Leader

The leader is defined as one person in a leadership relationship. The leader must be a benevolent, essentially selfless, and certainly courageous individual who bears the primary responsibility for the effectiveness of the leadership process. Further, the leader is the individual who assumes responsibility for interpreting, defining, and fulfilling the needs of his or her followers and achieving goals of his or her society.

In this study, many of the literary protagonists have, because of the times in which the action of their stories takes place, been cast into roles of governance, often over followers for whom self-expression was not a common mandate. In these instances, I have identified the leaders in terms of their benevolence, their courage, and their ability to act morally in time of severe crisis.

Hero

A hero, for purposes of this study, is defined as an individual who accomplishes great feats, usually demonstrating singular courage in the face of terrible risk. The hero, unlike the leader, operates essentially alone, without followers and the responsibilities which they engender. Heroes do not, as a rule, practice

leadership because their prime motivation is self-aggrandizement.

Limitations and Assumptions

The most exciting aspect of this dissertation is that each work read has led to several more literary works which could, in time, have created an overwhelming array of possible areas of study. My major task is to shape an enormous volume of information into a concise, coherent study.

The nine works upon which I have chosen to concentrate are by no means definitive. They are simply my choices of representative work from the vast spectrum of human creativity. My major assumption is that by a thorough examination of these works, I will find a connecting thread that will support the view that the concept of leadership has always had a place in the thought processes of educated human beings. There is an almost infinite variety of works on which I could have based this study; I selected these primarily because I am familiar with them and because, quite honestly, I think that they will lend themselves to the justification of my supposition.

I could, of course, be accused of stacking the deck, of basing a rather broad supposition on an outrageously small selection of literary works, while the vast

compendium of Western--not to mention Oriental--literature goes unnoticed. My response to such an accusation is twofold.

First, I think that this is truly groundbreaking work. To my knowledge, there is no extant work which specifically addresses the idea of leadership in Western literature. Consequently, I wish to avoid being overly ambitious by concentrating on works which I am reasonably sure will not lead up blind alleys.

Second, the works that I have chosen are classics. If I can, indeed, find legitimate traces of leadership in them, then my point will have been made. Whether or not the concept exists in other unexamined works will be for others to determine.

Finally, because there appears at first glance to be something of a dearth of scholarly work in the area of leadership in literary fiction, a fairly substantial portion of this study consists of original thought, as I have tied perceptions of literary figures to my own ideas as to what leadership is and is not. This is the major challenge and probably the major limitation of the study.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A man, to be Greatly Good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own.

Percy Bysshe Shelly,
A Defense of Poetry

Introduction

This is a study of leadership in literature. Consequently, the bulk of the research has been conducted by reading and analyzing works of a purely literary nature. In addition to the nine aforementioned primary works and four literary eras, I have concentrated on additional pieces by the same authors, related works from the same respective era, scholarly writing and criticism relevant to the primary pieces, and certain generic works dealing with a specific literary era or genre. This reading is reflected in the references.

All of that notwithstanding, the subject of this study is not literature, but leadership. This literature review, therefore, is strictly a survey of works which have proven to have some relevance to the topic of leadership. As

such, it is unique for two reasons: first, because a significant portion of the reference list is not included in the literature review, and second, because, while there is an abundance of work available on the subject of leadership and management, research has turned up very little of substance devoted expressly to the relevance of formal literature to the study of leadership. Consequently, the relationship between primary works cited in this review and the direct application of literary works to the study of leadership has been somewhat subjective and occasionally rather tenuous. I have attempted whenever possible to differentiate among those works which deal directly with leadership in literature, and those which are relevant only through personal interpretation.

Literature Survey

Twentieth century writers on the subject of leadership seem to have lost touch with the past. To be sure, the concept of leadership as a discipline for study and observation is a 20th century phenomenon. But the dynamic of the leader/follower relationship is timeless and universal. Inasmuch as the literary corpus which forms the basis of this study covers such a wide chronological spectrum, I have sought to parallel this literary scholarship with nonfictional writings with a relevance to

the study of leadership during the same periods of time. To do this successfully in pre-twentieth century scholarship, I have had to turn to the philosophers. Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and many others have all provided cogent contributions to the art of statecraft, and I have relied on them greatly for insight into the intellectual thought processes taking place in society during the times in which the selected literary works were composed.

This approach has worked well because the pre-twentieth century philosophers were quite aware of their literary and historical heritage. Their work is, consequently, rife with literary allusions and with recognition of past scholarship if not on leadership per se, then at least on the task of governance. This is not the case with the 20th century writers. It has been disappointing to discover that the bulk of the modern writers on leadership are thinking in terms of corporate leadership and appear blind to the fact that the art of leadership has been practiced, on both a grand and minor scale, since the beginning of time.

There is much to be learned by studying leaders of the past, both historical and fictional, but there are very few modern books on the shelves which deal with the process of leadership as expressed in fictional works. Those that do, I have found, have turned out to be more about corporate management than about leadership.

Clemens and Mayer made a valiant attempt to apply fictional examples to contemporary leadership situations in their 1987 work, The Classic Touch, Lessons in Leadership from Homer to Hemingway. Their introduction is quite tantalizing:

It's not surprising that books like Plutarch's Lives, Shakespeare's King Lear, and Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls offer rich perspectives on the job of leadership. After all, the problems that are central to effective leadership--motivation, inspiration, sensitivity, and communication--have changed little in the past 3,000 years. Those problems were faced by the Egyptians when they built the pyramids, by Alexander when he created his empire, and by the Greeks when they battled the Trojans.

(Clemens and Mayer, 1987, p. xiii)

Regrettably, the book does not live up to its promise. It does not use examples of the past, either historical or fictional, to gain a clearer insight into modern leadership problems, rather it uses classical works as a gimmick to demonstrate what purports to be effective modern management techniques.

Another promising recent work is Roberts' The Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun (1987). This work, too, turned out to be very little more than a collection of post-Machiavellian aphorisms which, for the most part,

uphold a sort of hard boiled, no nonsense brand of corporate leadership. Like Clemens and Mayer (1987), the book is probably worthy of examination, but it is not to be confused with scholarship on the subject of leadership.

Bothwell, in a 1983 work called The Art of Leadership, has produced a work which does not go very far beyond its most compelling title. Upon close examination, it, too, turns out to be a management primer which does not acknowledge that a leadership process was taking place prior to the second half of the 20th century.

Jennings (1960) has done an exceptionally good job of relating the works of the pre-twentieth century philosophers to the leadership process. He acknowledges that, while philosophers such as Machiavelli, Kant, Hegel, Carlyle, et al. were not writing on the subject of leadership per se, they were, in fact, writing about the process of governance. Accordingly, a familiarity with their work is essential to an understanding of the relationship among leaders and followers as perceived by their respective cultures.

He goes on to discuss the modern corporate environment in terms of prototypes whom he labels supermen: "rule breakers and value creators;" heroes: men "dedicated to great and noble causes;" and princes: "men motivated principally to dominate others" (Jennings, 1960, p. 1). Jennings' work touches only peripherally on literary allusions, but his extensive use of the philosophical

perspective was most helpful, both in providing an understanding of a variety of pre-twentieth century cultures and in providing guidelines for smoothly differentiating among the various perspectives from which leadership might be viewed.

Somewhat frustrated by this seeming blind spot in the minds of 20th century leadership scholars, I interviewed Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale to get his views on leadership in literature. Admiral Stockdale is an acknowledged leadership scholar who has written extensively on his concentration on the classics as a means of keeping his mind clear and active during his six years of captivity in North Viet Nam. He served for three years as president of the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island where he is legendary for having incorporated classical writings into what was theretofore an exclusively technical curriculum. He is currently a Fellow at the Hoover Institute for the Study of War and Peace at Stanford University. During the interview, which extended well beyond its allotted 60 minutes, Admiral Stockdale demonstrated a remarkable familiarity with nonfictional classical works on leadership, citing such authors as Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Thucydides, and a host of others. But beyond a few fairly obvious works of fiction such as Crane's Red Badge of Courage and Melville's Billy Budd, he had, by his own admission, given very little thought to the study of leadership in literature, and

appeared quite intrigued by the purpose and intent of this study. I mention the interview at this point primarily to illustrate the fact that this distinguished scholar who has devoted much of the last 15 years to developing a classics-based approach to the study of leadership, considered two first draft chapters of this study (he read Chapters 4 and 5) to be without precedent.

The Image of the Leader

Philosophical Background

If we are to find writers on leadership in pre-modern times, we must look to the philosophers; from Plato's philosopher kings to Machiavelli's Prince, from Hobbes' rather gloomy depiction of sovereignty to the superman of Nietzsche. The philosophers studied leaders and determined for the most part that they did not lead at the will of the people, but rather as a result of position; position based not necessarily on ability or integrity, but on tradition, religious sanction, and power.

Grob (1984) discussed leadership from the Socratic perspective:

The endeavor to locate a truly philosophical perspective on leadership in any historical consensus on the essence of leadership is certain to fail. It is clear to even the beginning student of philosophy that the great thinkers of the West are far from

agreement with regard to a depiction of the nature of the ideal leader. (p. 263)

Plato and the Philosopher Kings

Any study of leadership taken in an historical perspective must examine the philosophers, and where better to begin than with Plato? Plato, writing in the fourth century B.C., not long after The Iliad and The Odyssey were first transcribed, set forth the idea of the leader as philosopher king in his Republic (1964). The nominal purpose of Plato's Republic was to answer the question, what is justice? And Plato's premise is that the ideal leader must understand the essence of justice if he is to lead the state to a position of absolute and unbiased justice relative to all of its people. The Greek word for justice includes much more than our modern concept of legal or political equality; it also means righteousness in the sense of the exercise of virtue. Plato's search for justice, therefore, is a search for some principle by which both individuals and states may exploit their best natures to the fullest.

Plato's ideal leader, his philosopher king, is a lover of vision and truth who will lead people from "the shadows of images" (p. 254) to the world of intellectual being. "Until philosophers are kings," says Plato, "and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner

natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils--no nor the human race, as I believe--and then only will this our State have a possibility of life and behold the light of day" (p. 203).

The idea of the ruler as a moral leader is further articulated in Plato's Statesman (1957) and throughout his Dialogues (1958), wherein the leader is commonly equated with the teacher whose role it is to impart to his subjects a higher sense of morality and ethics. So, Plato's ideal leader is, in the final analysis, a ruler by virtue of his or her exceptional wisdom and a clear ethical responsibility to the people.

Machiavelli and The Prince

If Plato dealt with ideals, Machiavelli, in The Prince (1952), dealt, in the words of Francis Bacon, "with men as they are, not as they ought to be" (p. 14).

Whereas Aristotle, following in the tradition of Plato, regarded the leader as an educator with three requisite qualifications for leading: (1) loyalty to the people, (2) wisdom to fulfill the role of leader, (3) virtue and justice appropriate to the needs of the people (Politics, 1941), Machiavelli was not concerned with the education of the citizens. They are regarded as inert. His leader, his prince, is not an instrument for raising the common morality; he is, instead, a dynamic, amoral

entity, a force.

The major difference between Plato's state and Machiavelli's is the difference in the leader follower relationship. Plato had a sense of respect for the innate intelligence of the people and found them capable of being led to a higher moral plane. Machiavelli, on the other hand, saw the people as impediments to the progress of the state, and held their leader responsible for seeing beyond their perverseness and recalcitrance. Nevertheless, the prince, because he is, above all, a patriot, is encouraged to act in accordance with a moral code and to strive to improve the welfare of his people. He must be, that is, a benevolent ruler because a benevolent relationship with his people is in his own self-interest and, thus, in the self-interest of the state.

Hobbes and The Leviathan

While Machiavelli held the proletariat in contempt, essentially inert pawns to be manipulated by a wise and realistic ruler, Thomas Hobbes, in The Leviathan (1947) written in 1651, postulated that humans were ruled by self-serving passions and that the definition of leadership included the subjugation of people's perverse human nature. Hobbes' leader, "by his authority, given him by every particular man in the commonwealth, hath the use of so much power and strength. . . .that by terror thereof, he is enabled to form the wills of them all" (p. 157).

Whereas Aristotle held that humans are naturally social beings who recognize the claims of the community upon them and share in its prosperity, Hobbes considered the subjects of the state to be purely selfish creatures, seeking their own personal advantage. Consequently, the role of Hobbes' leader was to enforce the laws of the state with absolute power, subject only to God.

Thus, we have seen the relationship between the leaders and followers deteriorate from the moral covenant of Plato's philosopher king to the benign manipulation of Machiavelli's Prince, to the suppression of will set forth in Hobbes' Leviathan.

Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought

Up to this point in time, that is the beginning of the 17th century, Western philosophers who considered the concept of leadership at all did so from the perspective of the divine right of kings. While the philosophers set forth a wide variety of relationships between the leader and the led, there was very little attention devoted to the question of a given leader's moral right to lead at all. This notion of the divine right of kings became the doctrinal justification of the Reformation and Postreformation periods in England, and lost favor only after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. At which point, Henrickson (1989) has stated in his excellent summary of

the philosophical approaches to leadership, "the dialogue that Socrates first called for was slowly becoming a reality" (p. 147). With that dialogue came the radical concept that not only could followers have a voice in the choices of their leaders, they could aspire to positions of leadership themselves.

Perhaps the clearest proponent of this new concept of power to the people was John Locke. In 1690 Locke published two Treatises of Government (1959) designed to combat the theory of the divine right of kings. "There remains still in the people," said Locke, "the supreme power to remove or alter the legislature when they find the legislative act contrary to the trust reposed in them" (p. 78). Throughout his work and the development of his theory of the "original contract," Locke was the opponent of Hobbes' Leviathan, because he questioned not only the nature of the relationship between leader and led, but the very mandate by which the leader leads. Locke, and shortly thereafter, Kant and Hegel, symbolized a new order of things, an order wherein the followers began to exercise the right to participate in the leadership process.

Meanwhile, on the continent, Jean Jacques Rousseau began his lifelong revolt against the existing social order through such works as A Discourse on the Influence of Learning (1750), followed by a Discourse on the Origin of Inequality (1754). Of Social Contracts, setting forth his political philosophy, was published in 1762. This work had

a profound effect on French thought, especially after 1789. In it, Rousseau attributed evil not to sin, but to society. Sin was a departure from the natural state of humankind in which people are both good and happy. Rousseau held the view that society is founded on a social contract, and that the head of the state is the people's mandate, not their master.

Nietzsche and the Superman

Frederich Nietzsche (1954) went beyond the question of who is qualified to lead whom by asking completely new questions regarding our moral values and ethics. The mandate of his leader was a total reevaluation of the social structure. "I teach you the superman. Man is something that shall be overcome. . . .Man is a rope, tied between beast and superman. . . .What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end: What can be loved in man is that he is an overture" (pp. 126-127). MacIntyre (1984) called Nietzsche the moral philosopher of the present age, and cited Nietzsche's resolve to permit people to rise above themselves by letting will overcome reason and, thus, becoming new, unique beings "who give themselves laws, who create themselves" (p. 114).

Summary

This study purports to view and analyze humankind's perception of leaders and leadership as expressed in

Western literature. Therefore, it is important that the historical and philosophical values of leadership be understood. It seems to me that the level of moral and ethical responsibility that has been attributed to leaders by the philosophers has been fairly directly related to the nature of the relationship between the leaders and their followers.

Plato, writing from a framework of democracy in Athens in the first millennia B.C., was able to tie leadership to the concepts of justice, equality, and statesmanship. Plato's philosopher king, although placed in a position of authority not by popular mandate but presumably because of his superior intellect, had a very definite obligation to his people to provide them with a strong concept of justice and to elevate them to a higher moral awareness. Plato's essential assumption was that the populace had both the intellect and the social awareness to allow itself to become so elevated. This concept demands a very special relationship between the leader and the led.

Machiavelli, writing primarily from the political perspective, saw no such relationship. He was writing during the height of the Italian Renaissance, a period in which leadership was a power game, and the people were, for all practical purposes, pawns. Therefore, his prince's moral obligation lay not to the people, but to the preservation of the state. In such a context, tyranny is acceptable because justice is subordinated to security.

Whereas Machiavelli viewed the leader/follower relationship as essentially neutral, Hobbes looked upon it as a conflict wherein the nasty and brutish urges of the people were things to be overcome and subjugated by the successful leader. Hobbes may have held the people in some contempt, but his intentions were benign. For Hobbes, the duty of the effective leader was to convert these brutish urges into proper ethical behavior, thus effecting a degree of moral uplifting.

Locke and Kant, writing in Postreformation Europe, acted as spokesmen for the Age of Enlightenment. Their work reflected the revolutionary zeal of the 18th century by espousing the elevation of the individual in the moral order and challenging the tyrannical social structure which ignored or abused the dignity of the individual. Rousseau further reshaped the leader/follower relationship by questioning traditional forms of authority, and the legitimacy of the so called ruling class. As people began to perceive themselves as participants in, not simply subjects of, the governing process, the entire social fabric changed. The moral and ethical obligation of the leader became apparent because the leaders themselves had risen from the masses.

Still, as Burns (1978) has pointed out, no new theory of leadership emerged from all of this turmoil. The very idea of the leader/follower relationship had undergone

cataclysmic change, from the Platonic concept of justice and harmony to the medieval power game, and back again to the enlightened viewpoint of the 18th century, yet there was still no perception of leadership as a concept. This idea would await the theorists of the 20th century.

Twentieth Century

Introduction

With regard to the leader/follower relationship, the 20th century has seen it all. It has witnessed Hitler, whose ultimate disdain for his people went radically beyond anything that Machiavelli or Hobbes could have imagined, and who twisted the ideas of Nietzsche into a form of power politics which corrupted the basically ennobling idea of the superman into something altogether perverted. This century has witnessed the Bolshevik Revolution which purported to usurp the tyranny of Czarist Russia and place the governing authority of the state back in the hands of the proletariat, and which, in fact, did the very opposite by paying lip service to the concept of rule by the people while creating a particularly monstrous form of tyranny.

The century has witnessed, as well, the continued success of genuine experiments in democratic government in, for example, the United States and Western Europe wherein, with varying degrees of success, the fragile egg of

democracy has been preserved and the moral and ethical mandate has been allowed to flourish. Most recently, of course, the century has witnessed the phenomenal transition of the countries of Eastern Europe and, to a more limited extent, most of the Soviet Republic from a status of severe totalitarianism to a very free-wheeling and volatile form of self-representation. This remarkable upheaval is testament to a new brand of leadership, the sort of postmodern phenomenon addressed by Ferguson (1980), in which the presence of an identifiable individual leader, a prime mover, is not altogether apparent, but wherein enormous social and political change is being effected as though by the sheer power of the will of the masses.

This particular revolution, the one going on in the Soviet bloc today, is being fueled and nourished by nationalistic instincts and by the awesome power of humankind's need for freedom, but the catalyst which has allowed it to happen is the economic failure of the Soviet system. And it is economics, not religion, not lebensraum, not even disassociated nationalism, which constitutes the new dynamic of the second half of the 20th century and surely, of the 21st century, as well.

War has become too expensive in terms of both the cost of military preparedness and risk of mutual destruction. Territorial expansion and, for that matter, any other form of political influence by force of arms is not only impractical, it is, by example of the Soviet experience in

Afghanistan and the American experience in Viet Nam, doomed to failure. The real--perhaps the only--source of global power today, as exemplified by the Japanese, is economic vigor. It is not surprising then, that most of what is being done in the field of leadership research since the end of World War II has been focused less on military and political endeavors and more on the corporate sector.

Leadership and Culture

The title of this study is "Literary Perceptions of Leadership," but it really is about nothing more grandiose than storytelling. Coles, in his book The Call of Stories (1989), cited the importance--no, the absolute necessity--of the use of stories both as a teaching mechanism and as a key to examining the culture of a given society. Coles is a teaching psychiatrist, so the thrust of his book is toward the therapeutic value of stories, but his point is universal. It is that long before the written word, before Herodotus and Thucydides attempted to set down historical events as they actually happened, mankind used fiction--stories, myths, fables, fairy tales--to educate, to explain, and to shape and define their culture. Scholars and philosophers from Aesop to Plato to Jesus knew the value of the parable and used it with telling effect. Moreover, the value of the story, of fiction as a teaching method has, if anything, increased during the current

century. Children's television--perhaps all of television, good and bad--is nothing more than storytelling adapted to the electronic age.

Insofar as storytelling's value as a means of examining societal culture is concerned, Jung (Storr, 1983) indicates that there are no more than a handful of universal, archetypal stories in the world and that a strong measure of any society can be taken by the variations which that society places on its universal myths.

The point here is that any study of leaders and leadership which focuses on literature must first examine the relationship between the leader and the culture of his or her society. And if that study is to include 20th century scholarship, it cannot ignore a very important subculture upon which modern leadership scholars seem to be focusing almost to the exclusion of everything else. The subculture to which I am referring is, of course, the corporate culture.

The process of leadership requires conflict. Since the middle of the 20th century, in spite of--or perhaps because of--the fragile standoff which has existed between the two superpowers, the primary arena of global competition has been economic. Consequently, the focus of leadership studies has been on the corporate front, as opposed to the political. Therefore, to understand the modern perception of heroes and leaders, it is necessary to

examine the culture which has given them shape and definition.

Societal culture, more than anything else, determines the nature of its leaders in any given era. It follows that fictional leaders and heroes are idealistic versions of cultural reality, since they embody most of the aspects of actual leaders and then reflect them back, often in a larger-than-life form. The writers of literature thus contribute to the leadership process by providing idealized examples which serve to raise the consciousness and the expectations of the people and their leaders.

Previously we looked at a number of philosophers whose political ideas tended both to form and reflect the societies in which they lived and wrote. Writers of fiction, poets, and dramatists, too, have created stories which speak of leaders and heroes who are reflective of their times. Often these fictional works take place in a time and place far removed from that of their authors--Shakespeare's Coriolanus is a good example--but invariably they are vehicles through which the author is able to comment upon the tenor of his or her own society. It is probably a truism that great times, times of crisis and cataclysm, produce great leaders. It may be equally true that great fictional protagonists--leaders and heroes--are also created in times of major societal upheaval because the authors, their creators, receive inspiration from the

turbulence of their times.

If, indeed, global conflict has, in the last fifty years, shifted from the battlefield to the boardroom, then it would follow that the quality of our leaders may have also undergone this change of venue. Bennis (1989) bemoans the absence of leadership in the United States, "Why have we not had any true leaders in the White House in a generation? Why are there no potential presidents who inspire or even excite us? Where, for God's sake, have all the leaders gone?" (p. 59). Bennis' premise is that as individual autonomy has waned, more and more pressure has been placed on our institutions not to lead us but to keep us happy. We have settled, that is, for a brand of leadership influenced by the lowest common denominator.

Bennis goes on to say that leaders are formed by their respective cultures; in fertile cultures, those in the process of significant change, leaders of heroic proportions are created. This is undeniable, but if, indeed, the focus of conflict has shifted from the political to the economic arena, perhaps Bennis is simply looking for his leaders in the wrong places. And perhaps none of us should be surprised to discover that as the nature of the conflict changes, the profile of the leader must also change.

Since the end of World War II, we have shaped a culture that is best defined in terms of its dominant subculture, the corporate culture. Deal and Kennedy (1982)

stated that every organization has a culture. There may have been a time before the computer, before instant global communication, when life was sufficiently simple and societal change so leisurely paced that a strong individual could, within the span of a lifetime, reshape a culture in his or her own image. But modern society has become too complex for that, and inevitably it is the culture which forms the persona of the leader.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) went on to say that cultures create heroes and that heroism is a component of leadership largely ignored by modern management (p. 37). This is precisely why the face of leadership--and of heroism--has changed so dramatically in the last fifty years. As the nature of global conflict has come more and more to be a reflection of an age of nuclear standoff and of heightened economic competition, the key to survival, if not success, has been caution. Cautious leaders--and certainly cautious heroes--do not inflame the imagination. Therefore, societies' leaders have moved into the economic sector and donned less colorful garb, while its heroes have had to take shape in such incongruous places as athletic fields and rock concerts.

That is not to say that modern leaders no longer influence societal or corporate culture, only that their level of influence is diminished and is affected by a wide variety of factors. Schein (1985) wrote that the strength of a corporate culture or subculture is linked directly to

the stability of the group's membership, the length of time the group has been together, and the intensity of group harmony. This thesis has equal application to societal culture, as well. A strong corporate or societal culture cannot, therefore, be created or even significantly altered in the short term by the decree of managers. Possibly it cannot be intentionally created at all; rather, it must evolve, often in a manner not altogether in concert with what the leaders had in mind.

There are almost as many approaches to the question of cultural change as there are modern leadership scholars. Nadler (1988) said that successful institutions are characterized--are labeled, in fact--by an individual leader who not only serves as a focal point for dynamic change, but whose presence imparts a special magic to the organization. This magic is a combination of vision and intense energy which creates a synergistic flow throughout the populace, an urgency, if you will, to get on with the destiny of the organization. Nilson (1987) expanded on that theme, stating that the leader must articulate and communicate the vision of the organization.

Sergiovanni (1984) considered leadership as a cultural expression. He felt that the acts of the leader are expressions of the culture of the organization, and that it is the organization's culture, deep rooted and long standing, which shapes the persona of the leader. Dyer (1983), on the other hand, discussed the tactic of

reshaping an organization's culture by changing its leaders. His assumption is that leaders create the culture, so it follows that an organization can be changed by changing its leaders. Pfeffer (1981), too, is in the leaders-can-create-culture camp. His premise seems to be that while managers can run institutions on a day-to-day basis, it takes leaders or heroes to create or significantly alter a corporate culture. This view is reinforced by Pettigrew (1979) who cautioned against the study of leadership outside the context of organizational culture. Selznick (1957), also, held the view that leaders can substantially change organizational culture.

What this is leading up to is that culture and leadership are joined together in a fairly dynamic symbiotic relationship. Cultures are long in forming and slow to change. Cultures nourish and develop leaders in their own image, but leaders can and do alter societal and corporate cultures, both intentionally and unintentionally, as they undergo their own formative process. The balance of influence between culture and leader is dynamic, but as society has grown more and more complex, particularly in the past half-century, the ability of the leader significantly to shape his or her culture is diminished.

Myth and Symbolism

Levinson (1981) felt that the culture sets the standards and ideals for the leader, and furthermore, that

any leader who did not conform reasonably to these standards would ultimately be found wanting by the people of the organization. Krefting and Frost (1985), however, advised that leaders could, through the use of symbols and imagery, alter and develop the potential of organizations. They, too, saw good leaders as being creatures of the culture, yet endowed with the requisite strength and vision to see beyond the strict envelope of the corporate culture. Mitroff (1983) believed strongly in the importance of archetypes. Among his archetypes stands the organizational hero who can change the course of an institution by sheer energy and force of will. Many of our popular managerial texts devote a great deal of space to these sorts of archetypal heroes. Peters and Waterman (1982) have framed a best seller on the subject. Lee Iacocca (1984) has made himself the hero of his own corporate drama. But like the fictional storytelling of past eras, much of this literature is no more than a telling of things as they might have been if life always went according to plan. In fact, while there are corporate heroes out there hacking away with their broadswords at organizational cultures, most of the lasting work is still being done slowly and subtly by the leaders working within the framework of their respective cultures.

Eoyang (1983), in a splendid essay on the symbolic transformation of belief systems, stated that leaders ultimately become symbols of their societies by

"representing to the world at large the important values and beliefs of those that follow" (p. 116). This view reinforces the concept that the leadership/culture relationship is essentially cyclic. The leader is formed by the society or the organization to the extent that he or she becomes one of its tangible symbols. In turn, and from that solid symbolic base, the leader--the good leader--may then influence and perceptibly alter the society or organization from which he or she was created.

If, as Eoyang (1983) said, leaders become symbols of their societies, then these symbols are shaped over time through myths, stories, and dramatic rituals. Bolman and Deal (1986) indicated that these three methods of expression served modern corporations by helping them fulfill four major functions: to socialize, to stabilize, to reduce anxiety, and to convey messages to external constituencies. This is a fair statement, but it has ramifications far beyond the confines of the corporate structure.

Vargas Llosa, in his celebrated fictional work The Storyteller (1989), attributes the very survival of an Amazonian indian tribe in modern Peru to the efforts of its traditional storytellers who spent their lives walking among the widely dispersed tribal enclaves, keeping alive the myths and stories which were the foundation of the tribe's heritage. Without its storytellers, said Llosa, the tribe would have lost its homogeneity and eventually

disintegrated. Thus, a society expresses its culture, its mores and even its vision of the future in its stories, and that society's leaders, nurtured on those stories from childhood, reflect the values which those symbols represent.

There are a number of scholars who have dealt in one way or another with the relevance of stories and myths to the actual grooming of cultural heroes and leaders. Campbell (1988), of course, devoted his entire career to the relationship between myth and heroism. He was keenly aware of the necessity for cultures to express themselves. "Mythology is poetry," he said, "it is metaphorical. Thinking in mythological terms helps to put you in accord with the inevitable of this vale of tears. You learn to recognize the positive values in what appear to be the negative moments and aspects of your life. The big question is whether you are going to be able to say a hearty yes to your adventure. The adventure of being alive" (p. 163).

Van Gennep (1960) has written a superb treatise on the cultural molding of individuals through a series of rites of passage. His work pertains not only to primitive societies, but to modern cultural rites as well. Carpenter's work (1946) is extremely useful by providing, with Homeric epic as his base, a splendid definition of the differences among fiction, folktale and myth. There are others who have touched upon the cultural and symbolic

origins of leaders. The list includes: Bailey (1988), Bellah et al. (1974), Burns (1978), Chemers (1984), Foster (1988), Kellerman (1984), MacIntyre (1984), March (1984), Mitroff and Kihnan (1975), Owen (1984), Rosen (1984), Rost (1985), Zaleznik (1974), and many others.

Areas for Further Research

A major point of frustration with this study has been the fact that any one of the four chapters dealing with a selected literary period could, itself, have been expanded into a dissertation. Consequently, over and above any additional literary works which might have been examined, there remains a wealth of historical and philosophical work which, regrettably, remains untapped by this study.

In the classical period, for example, I have ignored the Romans. A deeper probe into this period would have included Virgil's Aeneid, as well as a look at Cicero, Horace, Ovid, and perhaps Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars.

The medieval period should be expanded to include the Icelandic Sagas: Nyals Saga, and The Laxdella Saga. Historical and philosophical texts to be examined might include Thomas Aquinas, Chretien de Troyes, and Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The Renaissance at the very least might have been expanded to include Dante and Christopher Marlowe. Philosophical and historical research might have included

Francis Bacon, Pascal, and Spinoza.

There are, in the modern era, works of fiction and nonfiction simply too numerous to mention. Let it suffice that throughout the centuries, the art of leadership has remained a rich and rewarding field for the writers of all ages to plow.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research design for this qualitative study was conducted in accordance with some uniquely subjective guidelines. I examined the pattern of leadership as transcribed over almost three thousand years of Western thought and set down, based on my examination, relatively broad, subjective, and personal views on the nature of leadership.

My research design and methodology have been, therefore, relatively straightforward. The first order was a detailed reading of the nine primary works cited in Chapter 1, along with selected peripheral works, literary criticism, and scholarship relative to those works. The reading and analysis of these works comprises the major portion of the entire research effort.

In addition to this concentration on the primary literature, I examined and re-examined a fairly representative sample of philosophical works, historical writing, and contemporary literature on the subject of leadership in order to provide a valid, if somewhat broad,

standard against which to judge and compare my selection of literary protagonists. As alluded to in Chapter 1, the research quickly evolved into a cyclical process as perceptions of what did and did not constitute leadership altered in both form and content over the centuries.

Finally, inasmuch as it has been my premise throughout the conception and formulation of this work that the ideas of leaders and leadership have always occupied a niche in the conscious thought processes of humankind, I have studied a small body of literature dealing with archetypal myth and the transference of that myth from the oral tradition into a written body of literature.

Literature Studied

Because the field of literature is so vast, it has been necessary to limit my study to selected eras, and within them, to specific works. I began with the classical period simply because the Greek and Roman cultures were the first Western cultures to transcribe myth to the written word and, having done so, to convert works passed down in the oral tradition into literature. It is my basic supposition that all the truths of human thought since people became sentient can be found in myth and that, accordingly, the words of the classical authors remain the most basic expression of human thought.

I had a mentor once who said, not entirely for its theatrical affect on impressionable graduate students of literature, that there were really only three basic stories in all of Western literature: Prometheus (people in conflict with their gods), Oedipus (people in conflict with their relations), and Antigone (people in conflict with the state). All else, said this mentor, is derivative. That interpretation may be a bit limiting but its basic premise, that the foundation of all our literature lay in the classics, is quite valid and, consequently, this study of leadership must begin with the classical authors.

In this period, I concentrated on The Iliad and The Odyssey of Homer, and Sophocles' Antigone. The classical period was an age of heroes; leadership remained a very vague concept. To be sure, leadership in the modern sense took place in the Homeric age. There were, for example, large contingents of soldiers massed before the walls of Troy, and these soldiers had to be fed, armed, and led into combat. But Homer did not speak of leadership. He was concerned only with singular, heroic combat between individual heroes. And the heroes, themselves, show essentially no awareness of their followers. The reader is left to his or her own devices as to whether or not leadership was taking place in Homeric Greece and if so, whether or not the author was conscious of it.

Sophocles' Antigone presents a slightly different problem. In Creon, ruler of the city of Thebes, Sophocles

created an exceptionally modern leader and placed him in direct conflict with Antigone, an almost perfect singular hero. Antigone may be literature's first example of the conflict between leader and hero, and clearly Sophocles' sympathies lay with the singular hero.

Research in the medieval period focused on Beowulf and Sir Thomas Malory's Le Mort D'Arthur. The middle ages was a time of significantly increased complexity. Cities were building, a middle class was beginning to form, politics was emerging as an influencing factor in civil life. This complexity required new ideas on what leadership was all about and on the relationship between the leader, as exemplified by King Arthur, and the traditional hero, personified by Lancelot, Gawain, and Galahad.

The writers of the medieval period were faced with a unique dilemma. Suddenly, the line between leader and hero had become less sharp. As the importance of the state grew in the lives of the people, so grew an appreciation for the rigors of statecraft. Consequently, Le Mort D'Arthur at once glorifies the exploits of the lone hero while expressing strong sympathy with the agony of Arthur's attempts to impose conscious leadership on what proves an essentially ungovernable body of independent knights.

Beowulf provides a splendid opportunity to trace character development. As a young prince sent forth to do battle with a variety of monsters, Beowulf is the epitome of the medieval hero. But as the hero grew older, Beowulf

was gripped with increasing ambiguity over his desire for personal, heroic glory and his nation's need for stable leadership. Thus, the fascinating aspect of Beowulf is the poem's presentation of the conflict between leader and hero--in the same individual.

Shakespeare, writing in the Renaissance period, presents in Coriolanus and Henry V two very different protagonists. The value of including Coriolanus in this study is that in this play, perhaps for the first time, the common people--the followers--have a role to play. Coriolanus is Western literature's first example of a would be leader placed in conflict, not against rival heroes, nor monsters from the realm of myth, but against those very people whom he would lead. Coriolanus, written at the end of the 16th century about a period in the history of ancient Rome, is in this sense a very modern play.

Henry V is clearly a play about leadership. In Henry V, Shakespeare reveals that the tasks of leadership in the complex Renaissance world have taken on an added dimension, the requirement to bear some level of responsibility for the ethical and moral conduct of one's followers. Thus, King Henry is of great interest to the leadership scholar because he is the first protagonist in Western literature to come to grips with the challenges of what we in the 20th century would call transformational leadership.

The modern age is represented in this study by Herman Melville's Billy Budd and Herman Hesse's The Glass Bead

Game. If the classical authors first recorded the idea of leadership as it came down to them from the oral tradition, and medieval authors further refined the concept until it could be articulated by Shakespeare, then it became the task of modern writers to further define the relationship between leaders and followers in terms relevant to the complexities of modern civilization.

Hesse, in The Glass Bead Game, created a society based almost entirely on pure knowledge, and traced therein the agonizing mental processes of a leader who becomes increasingly aware of his society's disharmony with the modern world which lies beyond its boundaries. This metaphor of modern education provides a revealing look at a man who, having devoted all of his energy--his very persona--to intellectual excellence, discovers that his leadership has extended only to a very exclusive inner circle of followers, and that he has, accordingly, wasted his gifts on what has become a closed-loop process which benefits the few and ignores the many.

Herman Melville, in Billy Budd, presented a splendid example of the agony faced by a leader who is faced with the dilemma of choosing between his love for the individual--for the hero, if you will--and his loyalty to the establishment which he is sworn to serve. This story provides a perfect close to this study because it brings the challenges of the leader full-circle, displaying a confrontation between the leader's moral responsibility to

the individual and his pragmatic obligation to the state. Billy Budd comes very close to Greek drama in its stark simplicity.

Peripheral Research

Beyond the nine major works on which this study is based, my research has been divided into four broad areas: Pieces dealing with the major works, themselves; parallel literary works by my subject authors and works from the same eras; works on the nature of myth and the link between the oral tradition and written literature; and works about leadership.

My original concept was to begin this study with a chapter which would establish an acceptable definition of transformational leadership against which to judge the fictional characters who appear in the study. The premise was to set forth solid criteria which would be used repeatedly throughout the study to determine whether or not the selected literary figures displayed sufficient leadership characteristics to qualify as Burnsian transformational leaders.

Next, before tackling the major works themselves, I had planned a short chapter on myth and the link between literature and archetypal belief. The premise here is that if there are conscious examples of leadership in Western

literature, they exist because there has always been an awareness of the leadership process in people's minds since they began to organize themselves into groups, and this awareness was eventually transcribed from the oral tradition into written literature.

There is nothing wrong with this premise, and it continues to constitute the cornerstone of the study. However, the deeper I delved into the literature itself, the more apparent it became that leadership as a discipline is essentially a 20th century concept. Consequently, the idea of redefining leadership, and then attempting to shoehorn fictional characters into the definition began to prove itself to be of dubious value.

I have, instead, refocused the design of my research toward a broader, more unfettered examination of each of the major works and their associated peripheral works. Then, armed with a solid background in leadership studies, I attempted simply to display the face of leadership as perceived by the selected authors in their own respective literary eras.

Research Design

This research proceeded as follows: (1) Develop a solid background in leadership based on philosophical and historical works as well as 20th century leadership scholarship, while avoiding, at least at the outset, any

temptation to set down definitive criteria against which to judge the selected fictional characters; (2) Examine representative works dealing with myth, the oral tradition, and human archetypes, in an attempt to establish a mental bridge between the basic archetypal ideal and written literature; (3) Study the lives of the fictional characters intensively and set down my perceptions of leader/follower relationships and their place within their respective society. In other words, how did they get the job done; (4) Trace the growth of a conscious concept of who leaders are perceived as being, from the primal hero to the modern 20th century leader.

I concentrated the study on nine selected fictional characters, focusing on two separate but interwoven areas: The personal strength of the individual, and the nature of his or her culture. Basing the study on an intensive reading of the major work and associated peripheral works, and reinforced with a solid background in leadership studies, I examined such aspects of individual persona as courage (both moral and physical), selflessness, ethics, conscious intent to effect change, vision, compassion, intelligence, and a variety of other characteristics associated with leadership. Then I attempted to evaluate the methods in which leaders displayed these traits in relation to the times in which the action of their stories took place. For example, of great importance was the relationship between the selected literary leader and his

or her followers, as well as the leader's relationship with the gods. Having taken these factors into consideration, I asked such questions as: What is the task? Who is the enemy? What is the nature of the organization? What else did this and other contemporary authors have to say about the times from, for example, a political or religious perspective? Additionally, I examined to some extent each consecutive work studied in terms of the entire corpus to see if there is, indeed, a growth or increased degree of complexity or sophistication with regard to the perspective from which people have viewed and judged their leaders over time.

Finally, I attempted to integrate all of this into a reasonably cohesive set of conclusions focused on leaders and the leadership process as defined in the first chapter, and on human perceptions of leaders and the way they lead as those perceptions have changed with changing cultures. Only then, after a coherent picture of human perception of the leadership process had been developed, was I able to trace the pattern of that process over the course of 3000 years of Western thought in order to draw intelligent conclusions as to the nature of the pattern of leadership as it has been portrayed in human letters.

CHAPTER 4

THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

The Oral Tradition

"By the general consent of the critics," wrote Samuel Johnson, "the first praise of genius is due to the writer of an epik poem, as it requires the assemblage of all the powers which are singly sufficient for other compositions." Dr. Johnson was speaking of John Milton when he wrote those words, but he concluded his essay with this phrase: "His work is not the greatest of heroic poems, only because it is not the first" (Hibbert, 1971, p. 135). That title, it seems, had already been won for all time by Homer whom the Greeks simply called "the poet."

Plato tells us that there were Greeks who formerly believed that Homer "educated Hellas and that he deserves to be taken up as an instructor in the management and culture of human affairs, and that a man ought to regulate the whole of his life by following this poet" (Plato, 1970 p. 214).

But, Homer, it must be remembered, was a poet of the oral tradition; a storyteller. Who he was and where he lived, when he composed, no one knows for certain. In

truth, a strong case can be made for the theory that The Iliad and The Odyssey were composed by two different authors; the Odyssey, perhaps, by a protege of Homer's. Robert Graves (1987) has made a good case for a female author.

Whatever the authorship of these two epics, it is important to the premise of this paper that we understand that the works are compilations of tales begun and fashioned orally, and the essential truth about stories created orally is that they changed each time they were told by the "Singer of Tales" who told them (Lord, 1971). An oral poet spun out his tale; he liked to ornament and embellish if he was talented enough to do so. He was above all else a storyteller. The Iliad is nothing more, really, than a compilation of myths whose loose central theme is an obscure raid by Greek heroes on a rather ill defined foreign city; The Odyssey is a homecoming tale associated with the somewhat unconventional hero Odysseus. Homer tells his tales fully and with a leisurely tempo, ever willing to linger on a theme he enjoys, or to depart upon a loosely related, tangential story for a while. And if the stories are apt, it is not because of a preconceived idea of structural unity which we have come to associate with written literature, but because at the moment when they occurred to the poet as he told his tale, he was so filled with his subject and the rhythm of his song that the natural processes of his trained mind have caused him to

re-create, to add or subtract as the story progressed. If an incidental tale should, to a modern reader, be irrelevant to the main story, this is no great matter, for the incidental tale has a relevance all its own, and this value was understood and appreciated by audiences who, in times before the written word came to the Greeks, sat at the knee of the storyteller.

Each theme, large or small, has around it an aura of meaning put there by all the contexts in which it has occurred in the past. Keep in mind that the Homeric audience was well versed in the lore of Achilles and Odysseus, Meneleas and Agamemnon, and all of the Greek heroes. If the poet took literary license by creating new twists to the tales, it was perfectly valid so long as he kept his heroes reasonably within character. To any given oral poet at any given time, the meaning of his song is a compilation of all the occasions on which he has used a particular theme in the past. It involved also all the occasions on which he had heard it sung by others, particularly by singers heard in his youth and by great singers by whom he was most impressed. For the audience, of course, the tale was colored by each member's own recollection of the myths (Lord, 1971, p. 148).

So, The Iliad and The Odyssey are not stories conceived and set down by one man at one time. They are, rather, the final, transcribed versions of stories framed

and interpreted by countless singers and audiences over a period of perhaps five hundred years.

With this in mind, it is reasonable to say that both The Iliad and The Odyssey are valid accounts of popular perceptions of familiar heroes. It is essential to note that the raid upon which the Trojan War was based took place around 1200 BC, and that the earliest that The Iliad or The Odyssey could have been written down was about 750 to 650 BC. It is also important to note that the heroes of The Iliad and The Odyssey, Achilles, Ajax, Odysseus, etc., had played a role in oral Greek mythology conceivably as early as 2000 BC. Myth and storytelling were activities of the highest social order, not the casual daydreaming of a poet. The essential subject matter was action; not ideas, creeds, or symbolic representations, but occurrences--wars, floods, adventures, births, marriages, deaths. "In mythical imagination, there is always implied an act of belief. Without the belief in the reality of its object, myth would lose its ground" (Cassirer, 1953, p. 101).

There has never been a human society without myth. One measure of humankind's advance from our most primitive beginnings has been the way in which we control our myths and our ability to bring our conduct under the rule of reason. The Greeks were preeminent in this initiative, and it is Homer who occupies the first distinguishable stage in the history of Greek control over its myths. His songs, which have their roots in the vastness of precivilized

myth, display a genius for ordering the world, for bringing man and nature, men and gods into a sort of balance, a harmony which signaled the beginning of the classical age (Finley, 1965, p. 16).

The World of Odysseus

The Odyssey, as it has been written down, is an epic poem of over twelve thousand lines. It has, like The Iliad, been divided into twenty-four books. Its narrative, very broadly, is divided into four major parts:

The Story of Telemachos	I-IV
Odysseus' Homecoming	V-VIII
The Great Wanderings	IX-XII
Odysseus on Ithaca	XIII-XXIV

Among the Greek Chieftains at Troy, Odysseus led a relatively small contingent; a mere twelve ships (as opposed to Agamemnon's one hundred plus). He is announced as king of the Cephallenians, who inhabit three adjacent islands in the Ionian Sea: Cephallenia, Ithaca, and Zacynthus. But it is with Ithaca that he is chiefly identified, and it is to Ithaca that he ultimately returns.

The island population is dominated by a group of noble families, some of whom participated in the Trojan War, some of whom stayed at home. Among the latter was Mentor, in whose trust Odysseus placed his young wife, Penelope, and his newborn son, Telemachos. For twenty years, there was a

very peculiar hiatus in the political governance of Ithaca. Odysseus' father, Laertes, did not resume the throne, although still in good health. Penelope, being a woman, did not rule. Mentor, although a guardian, did not assume any political leadership, and certainly did not function as a regent.

For the ten years that the Trojan War was fought, a similar situation seems to have prevailed throughout Greece while all of the kings were off at war. With the fall of Troy, and the great homecoming of the kings, life was resumed. The fallen kings were replaced; some, like Agamemnon, were betrayed by usurpers; others resumed their original power. But, Odysseus was to have a rather unique fate. Having offended the god Poseidon, he was tossed about on a ten year voyage which took place partly in the Mediterranean of the second millennium BC and partly in a land of fantasy and folklore. During his ten year voyage, no one in all of the Greek world, let alone his wife and son, had any idea where he was or, for that matter, whether he was alive or dead. This uncertainty laid the groundwork for the second major theme of the poem, the story of the suitors.

No less than 108 local nobles paid court to the "widow" Penelope during Odysseus' extended absence. The idea was that Penelope was to choose a husband from the Ithacan nobles who remained behind when Odysseus went off to fight (and presumably die) in the Trojan War. But, this

was no ordinary courtship. The nobles, an arrogant lot at best, ate prodigiously from Odysseus' larder and drank from his winery. For three years, (beginning with the sixteenth year of Odysseus' absence), Penelope managed to delay a decision. But her resistance was wearing thin. Plagued by fears that Odysseus was truly dead and continually pressed by the suitors, she was just about to give in when, just in time, Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, returned to Ithaca. Aided by his son and the ancient swineherd Eumaeus, he succeeded in tricking the suitors and slaughtering all 108 of them. Then, with the intervention of his benefactress, the goddess Athene, he re-established his position as head of the household and king of Ithaca.

At sea, Odysseus' life was one long series of struggles, with witches, giants and nymphs, not to mention a rather recalcitrant band of followers. In the course of his great wanderings, Odysseus managed to lose all of the spoils of his sack of Troy, all twelve of his ships, and all of his men.

Here, then, is a man who unlike the relatively one-dimensional heroes of The Iliad (including Odysseus, himself) assumes, in The Odyssey, a fairly complex persona. He is, by modern standards, an utter failure as a leader, while continuing to be a hero of great proportion and undiminished praise. Odysseus is, in short, a most untypical epic hero.

In order to understand this apparent paradox, his failure as a leader despite great success as a hero, it is perhaps necessary to consider the culture of the time in which The Odyssey was written. The epic view of the world was formed and transformed during what I will label the Greek "dark ages," that is the time between the fall of the great Mycenaean period in roughly the 12th century BC and the revival of towns in the 8th century. Whatever details of Mycenaean or even Minoan culture are evidenced in the Homeric epics, the true picture of Homeric society reflects those dark ages. Homer shows us, to be sure, people living in relatively small groups, dependent on one another for their mutual security against a very hostile world.

When the background condition of life, itself, is a condition of persistent war--when men feel themselves free to steal from anyone with whom they are not acquainted and to plunder and exterminate any town against which they have a grievance--men must, then, place inordinately close trust in those close to them. Thus, a constant condition of fear breeds closed-knit communities. The Homeric community consisted, in effect, of men who were ready to die for one another; the perimeter of each community being a potential battlefield. Under these kinds of social conditions, war is a natural state of affairs, and is perceived as the most important human activity because every community's ability to wage defensive war is perceived as a precondition for any and all other social values. Within the Homeric

community of the Greek dark ages, there can be families, productive labor, property, religion, even art, but all of these are luxuries which depend for their existence on the value of the warrior.

In the Homeric epic, the outcome of battle depended invariably on a few leading men. An anonymous mass may have appeared on a battlefield, but they were insignificant to the course of the battle; the war was won or lost on the exploits of those singular heroes who stepped forward from the mass, the promachoi, those who "fight among the foremost." These men were the aristoi, the princes, men who owned armor and chariots and were trained exclusively for the art of war. Their equivalent in medieval Japan was the samurai; they have no real equivalent in our own age of modern warfare.

Thus, heroism was for Homer a social task, and his heroes were very definitely assigned to a social stratum of their own. This was the Homeric governing class, the propertied class and the class on whom the burden fell for maintaining and, dare I say, leading the community. The most lucid statement of the hero's role and task is the Trojan Sarpedon's speech to Glaukas in The Iliad. It is spoken before the Greek ships, in the midst of battle:

Glaukon, why is it you and I are honored before others
with pride of place, the choice meats and the filled
wine cups

in Lykia, and all men look on us as if we were
immortals,
and we are appointed a great piece of land by the
banks of Xanthos,
good land, orchard and vineyard, and ploughland for
the planting of wheat?
Therefore it is our duty in the forefront of the
Lycians
to take our stand and bear our part of the blazing of
battle,
so that a man of the close-armored Lykians may say of
us:
"Indeed these are no ignoble men who are lords of
Lykia,
these kings of ours, who feed upon the fat sheep
appointed
and drink the exquisite sweet wine, since indeed there
is strength
of valor in them, since they fight in the forefront of
the Lykians."
Man, supposing you and I, escaping this battle,
would be able to live on forever, ageless, immortal,
so neither would I myself go on fighting in the
foremost
nor would I urge you into the fighting where men win
glory.

But now, seeing that the spirits of death stand close
about us
in their thousands, no man can turn aside or escape
them,
let us go on and win glory for ourselves, or yield it
to others. (Il.12, 310-328).

Here, Sarpedon sees that the privileges of the warrior serve both to mark his special status and to hold him accountable for the safety of the community. His privileges are a form of advance reward granted him by the community, which, in turn, collects its debt from the warrior on the battlefield. The warrior's prestige and perquisites thus serve to maintain in time of peace a social class which properly functions only in time of war.

As the community's need of warriors generates a social stratum, it also generates a curious paradox. War is by definition an unhappy state of affairs, the precondition of a protected community in a violent world. But, as the strength of the warrior class increases and stabilizes, the status and prestige of the warrior become entities unto themselves and the very desirability of a position in the warrior caste becomes a reason for the perpetuation of war.

Heroism, initially a social task, takes on a definite set of virtues associated with the task. The warrior's virtues, further, entitle him to claim a particular social status. But--and here is the paradox of the Greek warrior caste system--he can claim that status only if he can

demonstrate that he holds those warrior-like virtues, and he can prove this only on the battlefield. If his own community is not at war, the warrior must seek out--or initiate--combat elsewhere. Glaukas and Sarpedon, for example, were not fighting in defense of Lycia, their homeland; they were far from home, fighting for the glorification of their status as warriors. And so it comes to pass that the community's need for security generates a warrior ethic, which then serves to perpetuate aggressive warfare--which is a threat to security. This double meaning of combat--defensive and aggressive, altruistic and egocentric--is fundamental to The Iliad and to the entire social system of Homeric Greece.

Look again, if you will, at Sarpedon's speech; its tragic power is in its ending. In the first half of the speech, Sarpedon praises the warrior's role; in this role, he says, man may become godlike. In the second half, Sarpedon admits that all of this is merely an illusion; the hero may appear godlike, but he is only mortal.

This shift of perspective enables Sarpedon to justify heroism in another way. Men die. But the hero may choose to die well. He is a hero precisely because he is not a god. In his nature, the hero is like other men, but his culture bestows on him a unique value; he dies, but he is remembered. The hero knows this and his knowledge enables him to go forward. The compelling aspect of this knowledge

is that the hero can never forget the price that he will ultimately pay for his existence (Redfield, 1986, p. 179).

All men are born to die, but the warrior alone must confront this fact as a part of his role in society. On behalf of his community and his status therein, he must leave the relative comfort of the community and enter a world of force. The warrior can protect his society against force only because he is willing to use that force to his advantage and to suffer the pain of opposing force, to "win glory for ourselves, or yield it to others." The ancient Greek warrior, thus, stood on the boundary between culture and savagery.

The beauty of Sarpedon's speech lies in its implicit recognition of this paradox. To die for a cause--even if it is only self-aggrandizement--is better than to die for nothing at all. In accepting, no, in virtually welcoming death, the hero is in a sense rescued from mortality; he becomes godlike in status and immortal in the memory of his community. The greatness of Homer's heroes is not of action but of consciousness. Granted, there is little nobility in the act of war; war is barbaric and impure. But there is great nobility in men's capacity to endure war and to know themselves under impossible conditions. Homer's heroes, and, indeed, a whole compendium of heroes who followed, from the Samurai warrior to Gary Cooper's sheriff in High Noon, have the power to step out of their

own heads and conceive themselves, suspended between culture and savagery, both godlike and very, very mortal.

The Homeric warrior, placed on the fringes of his culture, is in an ideal position to view that culture as a whole. Culture has created and been nourished by the world in which men live. The warrior is a superior being because he knows this world to be ephemeral. Culture, which appears to us in a social context to be solid and enduring, is revealed on the battlefield--be it the plains of Troy or the jungles of Viet Nam--for what it is. The values conferred on life by culture are the only values we have, but they remain secondary, sustained at all only by man's common assertion of them. For the warrior, culture appears only as a rather translucent screen against the encroaching terror that lies beyond. The Homeric vision of the hero, thus, is nothing more than a sense of meaning uncertainly and temporarily shielded from meaninglessness (Redfield, p. 181).

The hero in Homeric Greece was essentially a loner. He was a nobleman of the warrior caste who engaged his enemy, also a single warrior, in desperate, hand-to-hand combat. We read in The Iliad of nameless soldiers advancing and retreating and, quite peripherally, being hacked to bits by one hero or another, but these groups of soldiers are far from central to the action. Surely there was, on the plains of Troy, leadership in the modern sense. Agamemnon and Meneleas arrived before Troy at the head of

large contingents of soldiers who, undoubtedly, had to be fed, armed, and eventually led into combat. But Homer does not speak of this aspect of the war. The term leadership is never used in The Iliad, and, while leader is occasionally applied to such kings and princes as Agamemnon and Hector, the word is used only incidentally and never elaborated upon. We are left to our own devices in determining whether or not leadership took place at Troy and who, indeed, were the leaders.

Although we cannot with any certainty identify specific references to leadership in the Homeric epics, we can note a change in the character of the hero from The Iliad to The Odyssey. As Greek power shifted in focus from the Greek mainland and its environs to a more pan-Mediterranean outlook, an increase in the complexity and sophistication of the Homeric hero becomes evident. Achilles, the hero of The Iliad, is great because he is wrathful and stubborn; Odysseus, in The Odyssey, is great because he is cunning and versatile. Achilles shows his worth by sacrificing to his personal resentment "the souls of many heroes" out of his own camp; he did, in fact, sacrifice himself on that same altar of stubbornness and self-centeredness (Il. 9, 104-16). Odysseus, by contrast, preserves himself because he understands that he is responsible for the homecoming not only of himself, but also of his comrades--although his comrades ultimately perish. The Iliad depicts terrible events which befall men

at what seems no more than the whim of the gods; The Odyssey also tells of the terrible deaths of Odysseus' comrades, but with a difference. In The Odyssey, men invite divine punishment by defying the gods and ignoring their warnings. Man, in The Odyssey, is no longer merely a pawn in a dark and unfathomable chess game. He has, instead, a modicum of control over his own fate, to please or to defy the gods as he chooses. The Odyssey, unlike The Iliad, is no longer romantically lamenting a world beyond man's control, instead it celebrates Odysseus, the canny realist who resolutely takes his destiny into his own hands and accepts the responsibility inherent in his own actions.

The greater realism and contemporaneity of The Odyssey give the poem an entirely different character. The distance between the narrator and his subject, so strictly maintained in The Iliad, is here perceptibly eased. Nature, essentially ignored in The Iliad, is restored to its proper place. Winter and bad weather affect Odysseus; he is afraid of the cold of night and the wind at sea, and of savage beasts on land and sea. People who are not heroes are, nevertheless, displayed in more than two dimensions. In The Odyssey there are beggars and swineherds, even a dog who is the only creature to recognize his homecoming master after twenty years. The use of similes is much reduced because a realistic world, not a stylized one, enters freely into the narrative.

The people in The Odyssey no longer live in an almost empty space; they are pleased--and terrified--by a variety of things which they see and hear. They are, in short, aware of their environment and, most importantly, of the fact that they have choices. The joy and the terror of discovery and of adventure form a background for a large part of The Odyssey. Odysseus, for example, ventures willfully into the cave of the Cyclops out of sheer curiosity and because he expects to receive gifts of hospitality (Od. 9, 224-30), and because of his boldness some of his comrades pay with their lives.

The outside world, no longer the shadowy, ill drawn place of The Iliad, seems constantly to play a hand in the proceedings. Men are now subject not only to the caprice of the gods, but also to their own wills, and, so, they become reserved and calculating. Aloofness and distrust become not only necessary characteristics, but also actual virtues. Deception and falsehood, useless in a contest between gods and men, now become legitimate weapons in the struggle between men of relatively free will. The modern ideal of the clever, experienced man who makes his way in the world by his own wits, displaces somewhat the heroic ideal, and awareness of this change causes The Odyssey's poet to exaggerate those traits which now stand at center stage. Odysseus, the "rogue" (Od. 5, 182), is the master of the new art of living by one's wits. The proud strength

and posturing of Achilles have given way to the wiles of Odysseus.

Odysseus is not merely an actor without a character of his own, or an adventurer not altogether aware of what he is seeking. For all of his roguery, Odysseus is a serious, mature, and energetic man. He pursues his goals, a little haphazardly perhaps, but with a thoroughness and perseverance that transcends the single-minded heroism of the heroes of The Iliad. The strength with which he eventually masters not only outside influences, but also his own often capricious spirit, is a new kind of heroism, a heroism which begins to approach the modern, civilized concept of leadership.

In The Odyssey, the term polytlas is often applied to Odysseus' name. The term translates to "much enduring" (Frankel, 1986, p. 165). A good example of Odysseus' endurance--and of the vast difference between his new brand of heroism and that of the heroes of The Iliad--is the scene at the beginning of Book 20. Odysseus lays himself down to sleep as a beggar in the vestibule of his own palace on the eve of the slaughter of the suitors. There he hears some of the serving maids going, amidst much laughter and foolishness, to meet their lovers among those selfsame suitors. Odysseus' heart begins to "bark," for as master of the house, the maids belong to him and their licentiousness outrages him. Natural pride would compel him to strike them all down at once. Achilles--even the

Odysseus of The Iliad--would not have hesitated for a second. His heart bays like a hound. But he admonishes himself to "endure."

Down; be steady. You've seen worse. That time
the cyclops like a rockslide ate your men
while you looked on. Nobody, only guile,
got you out of that cave alive. (Od. 30, 19-22).

In Homer, the dog is a continual image of audacity and steadfastness. In the cave, the Cyclops had killed and eaten two of Odysseus' men. "My hear beat high now at the chance of action," Odysseus tells the Phakians:

"And drawing the sharp sword from my hip I went
along his flank to stab him where the midriff
holds the liver. I had touched the spot
when sudden fear stayed me: if I killed him
we perished there as well, for we could never
move his ponderous doorway slab aside." (Od. 9,
299-305)

So, Odysseus controlled himself although he had to look on as two more of his men came to a very gruesome end. Then, too, his heart raged "doglike" as he constrained his urge to attack when "endurance" was the better course. "His rage, held hard in leash, submitted to his mind" (Od. 20, 23).

In the patience of the "much enduring" Odysseus, in the suppression of this rage and his pride, the poet spoke volumes of what was for Odysseus a most significant

personal transition. Odysseus is a major step removed from the heroes of The Iliad. He is labeled polymetis, "rich in ingenious ideas," and polymechanos, "rich in devices to achieve a goal." With such attributes does this new age, which graded its values very differently from the old, bedeck its hero.

Odysseus is a different sort of hero. He is not, certainly, a leader in the modern sense; but this is less the fault of Odysseus than of the poet who places little emphasis on relationships between his protagonists and the poem's peripheral characters. The hero of The Odyssey has a complex personality and manifold abilities, and he displays these abilities in manifold ways. His role in the Odyssey is not, like that of Achilles in The Iliad, primus inter pares, but if the lesser figures of The Odyssey are not in the same magnitude as Odysseus, they are drawn in similar style. They, too, are products of the new age: Penelope holds off the suitors through her ingenuity; Circe is convincingly cunning; Calypso is, at least in appearance, warm hearted and kind. This increased complexity of character makes the action in The Odyssey not only more complicated, but more unified as well. For every element of the action there are precisely ascribed conditions, all interrelated. The Iliad in contrast is a more loosely connected pattern of individual scenes.

An example of this increased complexity can be found in the way in which Odysseus relates to the gods. In The

Iliad the gods are in control. The heroes are brave because bravery very much matters when one's fate is at the mercy of often capricious gods. But wisdom and cunning count for less when one is subject to the continual whim of omniscient immortals. In The Odyssey, Odysseus encounters a different sort of divine intervention. When, for example, he arrives in Ithaca, he receives from Athene, not physical intervention or even inspiration, but rather detailed information and instruction which he can presumably elect to follow or ignore. So, in The Odyssey a distinction is drawn which would not have occurred in the earlier epic: "A god moved him--who knows--or his own heart sent him to learn" (Od. 4, 712-13). Divine direction and individual action are now separated so that man becomes responsible for his own actions.

Thus, the figure of Odysseus embodies the new Greek spirit at its fullest. From a practical point of view, he is a failure as a leader. Time after time, in the aftermath of the sacking of Ismarus, in the cave of the Cyclops, in the incident of the slaying of the cattle of Helios, Odysseus demonstrates an appalling lack of control over his consistently foolish followers. But it is significant that Homer, and presumably the Homeric audience, held Odysseus blameless for the loss of his men.

Leadership, at least in its literary manifestation, was, in the Homeric age, still a terribly vague concept. The poet used his secondary characters as foils against

which to contrast the varying moods and skills of his principal hero. When they followed Odysseus and accepted his authority, they generally came through the hazards of their voyage rather well. When they chose to ignore him, terrible things happened to them with alarming consistency. This is not altogether unlike Odysseus' relationship with the gods.

The significant factor here is that while in The Iliad the fate of the rank and file is of absolutely no interest to the heroes, Odysseus grieves for the loss of his sailors. His role as a leader remains, throughout, quite ill-defined, but he does, at least, care for his men and attempt to guide them through the hazards. If they chose not to heed his advice and leadership, then his responsibility to them was waived.

Odysseus' care for his sailors is a long way from the twentieth century view of leadership, but it is a significant step up from the two dimensional heroism of The Iliad. The poet of The Odyssey broke once and for all with the oral epic style of precivilized Greece, and paved the way for a new humanity.

Antigone: Leaders in Conflict

Sophocles' Antigone represents another stage in the progression of human perceptions of leadership in the classical period. In The Odyssey, Odysseus is cast in the

role of a leader, but an ambiguous poet denied him the most essential characteristics of a leader. Thus, while his heroism is unquestioned and his leadership well intentioned, Odysseus is ultimately a failure as a leader.

In Antigone, the problem of leadership is infinitely more complex, as Sophocles created, in Creon, an exceptionally modern ruler and placed him in direct and unequivocal conflict with Antigone, who is, as the play begins, a consummate example of the isolated hero.

The heroes of The Iliad, as we have seen, are pawns, subject to the capriciousness of the gods. Odysseus, in his tale, is an existential hero, bravely choosing his own path despite the god's oversight. But in Antigone the gods are gone. "Wonders are many, and none more wonderful than man. . . .and speech and wind swift thought and all the moods that mold a state, hath he taught himself" (Sophocles, 1971, p. 124-5).

This first stasimon of the chorus in Antigone is a paean to man's independence from the gods. How close it is to Hamlet's soliloquy: "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel!" (Hamlet, II, ii, 299-301).

But there is a dark side to this independence. The chorus goes on to say: "Cunning beyond fancy's dream is the fertile skill which brings him now to evil, now to good. When he honors the laws of the land, and that

justice which he hath sworn to uphold, proudly stands his city: no city hath he who for his rashness, dwells with sin" (Sophocles, p. 125).

There is no mention of the gods here. Sophocles is concerned with the laws of man. He wrote in the fifth century BC, a time when the legitimacy of the Greek city-state was being solidified, and the corporate welfare was becoming more significant than the role of the singular hero. Sophocles created the definitive story of the state in conflict with the individual, a theme which continues to pervade Western literature to this day, no closer to resolution now than it was when Sophocles first set it down.

Briefly the tale is this. Following Oedipus' exile from Thebes, his sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, wage war between themselves for control of the city. In this war, the subject of Aeschylus' Seven Against Thebes, each of the brothers dies by the other's hand in savage armed combat. Creon, the regent, decrees that Eteocles, who defended the city successfully against his brother, shall receive honorable burial, whereas Polyneices, who led the invading army against it, shall lie unburied on the field. Sophocles' play tells of their sister, Antigone, who defies Creon's decree in order to give her brother a ceremonial burial, and who is, as a consequence, sentenced to death by an inflexible Creon.

The power of Antigone lies in the fact that it is the story of a conflict between two impeccably just and moral causes. Antigone must, in accordance with divine law, bury her brother. Not to do so would leave his soul to wander aimlessly for eternity, forever denied entrance into Hades, the realm of the dead. But in Antigone the laws of the gods, however significant, are of secondary importance to the laws of man. Quite simply it would be outrageously indecent for a sister to leave the mutilated corpse of her brother unburied of the battlefield. Not to care for him would be inhuman.

Antigone never self-consciously overemphasizes her religious duty. In fact, that aspect of her stance is subordinated to a far more human--and remarkably feminine--resistance to Creon. She makes her free choice within a framework of a situation which, had she chosen to do nothing, would have become intolerable in its implications of personal dishonor (Lind, 1957, p. 79).

Consider, however, the dilemma which faces Creon. He is not a hero. He is, to use a modern sobriquet, a bureaucrat. He has held the city of Thebes together throughout a particularly bloody civil war. And, now, in an attempt to demonstrate the folly of revolt against the state, he has decreed a harsh, but ostensibly necessary, fate for would-be usurpers; they will not receive honorable burial.

Creon is the state. He must, in the wake of revolt and civil strife, hold things together, and, in so doing, he must, as all leaders eventually must, make difficult and occasionally unpopular decisions. Creon understands his role and the responsibilities which it entails.

"No man can be fully known, in soul and spirit and mind, until he has been seen versed in rule and law giving. . . .Our country is the ship that bears us safe, and that only while she prospers in our voyage can we make true friends. Such are the rules by which I guard this city's greatness" (Sophocles, p. 121).

He is, if somewhat stuffy about it all, doing his best to safeguard a state in peril. He understands that in order to do this, the requirements of the individual must be suppressed for the benefit of the state, and he is willing to stand his ground in the face of strong emotional appeal from virtually every side. Creon is a champion of pragmatism, at odds with emotion; not a particularly enviable position in which to find oneself, but a position remarkably common in the corridors of leadership.

Jean Anouilh, in his Antigone, written in 1946, is sympathetic with Creon's dilemma:

But god in heaven! Won't you try to understand me! I'm trying hard enough to understand you! There had to be one man who said yes. Somebody had to agree to captain the ship. She had sprung a hundred leaks; she was loaded to the water line with crime,

ignorance, poverty. . . .every man-jack on board was about to drown. . . .Was that a time, do you think, for playing with words like yes and no? Was that a time for a man to be weighing the pros and cons, wondering if he wasn't going to pay too dearly later on; if he wasn't going to lose his life or his family, or his touch with other men? You grab the wheel, you right the ship in the face of a mountain of water. You shout an order, and if a man refuses to obey, you shoot straight into the mob. . . .The thing that drops when you shoot may be someone who poured you a drink the night before; but it has no name. And you, braced at the wheel, you have no name either. Nothing has a name--except the ship, and the storm. Now do you understand? (Anouilh, 1958, p. 37).

And Antigone replies to Creon with this wonderful line which perhaps sums up the essentiality of humanism to leadership: "Creon, what a king you could be if only men were animals" (Anouilh, p. 37).

Anouilh sympathized with Creon in the light of a twentieth century understanding of leadership. Sophocles, while he understood Creon's pragmatic and impersonal position, had little sympathy for it. Writing in an age when the power of the faceless, impersonal state was held in strong distrust, Sophocles allowed Creon to remain intolerant, defending his position with desperate and sophisticated arguments until his defense collapses into

contrition and remorse, and he witnesses his son borne dead before him, and his wife take her own life.

Sophocles has presented two antagonists, both of whom bear the characteristics of leaders, but in profoundly different manifestations. Antigone is filled with overwhelming passion and emotion, but her acts are always very, very personal. As the end draws near, her defenses fail one by one until, finally, she abandons everything except the fact that she acted in defiance of the law simply because she had to. Facing death, alone, she has, ultimately, no confidence even in the gods:

"And what law of heaven have I transgressed?

Why, unhappy me, should I look to the gods anymore, what ally should I invoke, when by piety I have earned the name of impious? Nay, then, if these things are pleasing to the gods, when I have suffered my doom I shall come to know my sin; but if the sin is with my judges, I could wish them no fuller measure of evil than they, on their part, mete wrongfully to me"

(Sophocles, 1971, pp. 137-138).

Thus, in demonstrating her singular courage, Antigone persuaded the citizens of Thebes, as represented by the chorus, and presumably the modern reader of the play, that her opposition to the law had a basis in righteousness, that there are laws more universal and of a higher order than human laws. Therefore, Antigone, not by a position of authority, but by the strength of her moral persuasion and

the courage of her stand, demonstrated a very distinct kind of leadership.

But Creon, too, has his own honesty, his own justification, his own strong sense of responsibility. Creon may act the tyrant, but he is neither unintelligent nor irresponsible. He acts in a time of great crisis, with courage and selflessness because he firmly believes that only in upholding the law can he hold together the raveling fabric of his society. This, too, is a demonstration of leadership because it involves the process of a man rising above himself in time of peril to maintain the structure of his city and hold it back from the edge of chaos (Kitto, 1961, p. 128).

The greatness of Antigone lies in the fact that Sophocles was so keenly aware of the justice of both Antigone's and Creon's positions. He established, finally, a classic conflict between two leaders, one representing humankind's requirement for strong, solid, nurturing government, and the other its need for personal freedom. This is a conflict which, as we shall see, continued to be a very pervasive theme in Western literature

CHAPTER 5

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Beowulf: Hero as King

Beowulf is an Old English poem surviving from a 10th century manuscript, written most likely in East Anglia or West Mercia by an Anglo-Saxon poet, certainly a Christian, probably a priest. It tells of two major events in the life of the Gaetish hero, Beowulf. The first is of a time in his youth when he fights and kills Grendel, a monster who has been attacking Heorot, the mead hall of the Danish king Hrothgar, and then Grendel's mother who comes the next night to avenge her son's death. The second event comes fifty years later when Beowulf, who has for a long time been king of the Gaets, fights a dragon who has attacked his people. In this final combat, Beowulf and the dragon are both mortally wounded.

The historical period of the poem's events can be dated to the 6th century from a reference to Beowulf's King Hygelac by the historian Gregory of Tours (Drabble, 1985, p. 90), but much of the material from the poem, as is the case with The Iliad and The Odyssey, is not historical at

all; it is legendary in its origin, with distinct parallels in Norse, Old English, and Germanic myths.

From the point of view of this study, there are two significant ideas to be addressed. The first is that the poem was most likely first composed in the 8th century, a time when England was being won over from paganism to Christianity. There is, therefore, a strong thread of Christian commentary set down by the poem's Christian author about a period--and a hero--which were pagan. The degree of Christian morality evidenced in Beowulf is interesting in that its author appears ambivalent about how ultimately to regard a hero and a king who demonstrated clear Christian virtues but who lived and died in a pre-Christian world.

The second significant aspect of the poem, an aspect quite critical to this study, is the fact that we are shown Beowulf both as a hero in his youth, and as a king and leader in his maturity. This may be the first work of Western fiction wherein a comparison of the same character as hero and leader can be found. It is as though Homer had continued, in The Odyssey, to depict Odysseus as he rounded out his years on the throne of Ithaca.

The central story, particularly of the first half of the poem, is dictated by the poet's intent to present an embodiment of the heroic ideal. In this presentation Beowulf's remarkable feats of strength and courage are all manifestations of nobility, of the heroic ideal.

Beowulf, the hero, is a remarkably uncomplicated and straightforward character. Throughout the poem, he never, never ruminates over his options; his only choices as he sees them are to do his duty. A lesser man--and Beowulf is surrounded by lesser men--might vacillate over his fight with Grendel or the dragon; Beowulf does not. It is true that he possesses most extraordinary strength and skill (a familiar phrase in the poem consistently attributes to Beowulf the strength of thirty men), but he is, as well, quite aware of the possibilities of disaster. When, for example, he asks Hrothgar to allow him to await Grendel in Heorot, he observes with a sort of wry humor that Hrothgar hasn't much to lose. If Beowulf is killed, Hrothgar will not have to feed him for long, he will not even have to bury him because Grendel will leave nothing to bury. Beowulf even makes out a kind of will (an oral procedure in pre-Christian, nonliterate England) and commends his retainers to Hrothgar's largess. Later, before his fight with the dragon, Beowulf seems to know that he will not survive; still he does not hesitate to do the right thing.

There are no subtleties to Beowulf's method of fighting either. He has but one tactic: the frontal attack. He makes no special preparations, lays no plans. He simply presses forward. And when his sword fails him (as it inevitably does), he simply defeats his enemy with the strength of his hands. He is, at the beginning of the poem, a strong example of the heroic code. This is the

very same code about which Sarpedon speaks in The Iliad. Beowulf is a noble. He is granted great privilege among his peers because he is willing to take the risks. He is, at this point in his story, a hero, but he is not a leader.

In this respect, he is far closer to the heroic mold of his predecessors Achilles and Odysseus, than he is to any 20th century concept of leadership. Certainly Beowulf is placed at the head of his band of Gaets, and certainly in actuality such a position required leadership skills, but the poet has no interest in these skills. He is, instead, interested in Beowulf as a singular hero.

The first example of this comes just before the fight with Grendel. Beowulf has brought some 25 or 30 strong warriors with him to Hrothgar's hall. Yet, he does not place them tactically in an ambush situation any more than Odysseus used his men to overpower the Cyclops. No, he chooses to use them essentially as pawns in a chess match where all is focused on the embattled kings. Beowulf takes off his armor and announces his intention of fighting Grendel with his bare hands, since Grendel--a voracious, uncompromising monster--has no armor, and using a sword against him would clearly be unfair. Then, true to the code of the singular hero, Beowulf, after laying his plans, rather casually goes to bed. So do his men, but in a rather different state of mind. "None of them thought that he would ever return to his beloved homeland, where he had been reared for they had learned that a bloody death had

already carried off far too many of the Danes in that wine hall" (Garmonsway, 1968, ll. 669-96). The Danes at Heorot let the Gaets know that they considered them dead men, but loyal retainers that they were, honor bound them to their lord despite the fact that they had no active roles to play in the ensuing struggle. Like the companions of Odysseus, Beowulf's retainers are shadowy figures; none of them says a word in the entire first section of the poem.

As a matter of interest, the poet at this point, just as he has built the suspense to the breaking point, allows his Christianity to peek through. After noting the approach of Grendel, "In the dark night came stalking the walker in shadow" (Garmonsway l. 70), he reminds us that Beowulf, "fierce and resolute" will be saved by God.

This presaged outcome notwithstanding, the fight is an intense one, perhaps the high dramatic point of Old English poetry. Grendel enters the mead hall and immediately seizes and eats one of Beowulf's thanes. This all happens quickly, but in full view of Beowulf and the remaining warriors, and it is reminiscent of instances in both Homeric epics when we are shown nameless warriors (the eaten thane is, in fact, named much later in the poem when Beowulf tells of his adventures following his return to Gaetland) slaughtered indiscriminately as background to the exploits of the hero.

At this point, pandemonium breaks loose in the hall. Grendel, finding himself crushed in Beowulf's iron grip,

struggles to get away but cannot. Beowulf's retainers now take on an aura of responsibility which was not displayed by Odysseus' men. They draw their swords to aid their master, but are essentially ineffective and thoroughly peripheral to the fight. But at least the poet allows them to play a role and, more significantly, he allows their willing participation to serve as testament to the fact that there is some undefined form of leader-follower interaction taking place in the midst of Beowulf's display of heroism.

As an end to the battle, Grendel continues to pull away from Beowulf's grip and eventually his arm and shoulder are wrenched off. In the aftermath, men come from far and near to see the bloody arm and to tell and retell their own version of the fight. It is significant here, in this poem of heroes, that a certain subtle atmosphere of pity exists for the maimed Grendel. "That fierce fighter. . . .turned in flight, despairing of life. That final hour is not easy to flee, but each barer of a soul, driven by necessity, must seek the spot prepared where his body, fast on its final bed, sleeps after the banquet (Garmonsway, l. 945). If there is no conscious pity for the plight of Grendel, there is in these lines at least a grudging respect for a warrior who has fought hard and well, and a certain compassion and melancholy awareness of the inevitable fate of all mortals. Grendel, a fierce warrior, had reached the end of the road that all warriors must

travel, and after the first fury of battle has diminished, there is in its place a reflective sadness.

Throughout the poem, Beowulf is referred to by the Anglo-Saxon term aglaeca, translated as champion or hero. In this passage, the same term is applied to Grendel. He is, thus, regarded as a defeated warrior by the people of a warrior caste.

The remainder of the first part of the poem is devoted to Beowulf's struggle with Grendel's mother. She has come to Heorot to retrieve her son's arm and, in the process, has carried off Aeschere, one of the Danish nobles. Hrothgar, to whom Aeschere was particularly close, once again calls upon Beowulf for assistance and Beowulf, once again, complies.

The preliminaries to this second fight are much briefer than those for the first. The poet seems to have said all he cared to say about heroism the first time around and now has Beowulf, with very little ado, plunge off into the mere. Beowulf, once again fighting alone and without a strategy, sinks deep into the pool that is home to Grendel and his mother. At the bottom he is seized by Grendel's mother and dragged into her hall, which water does not seem to enter. Ironically, his struggle with what the poet terms the weaker female of the species proves far more perilous than that with Grendel. Only his armor (which seems not to be a hindrance even in water) saves him from the monster's teeth and claws and, finally, from her

dagger. Then, when his own sword proves ineffective, Beowulf seizes a mighty (monster size) sword he finds hanging on the wall, and in desperation strikes with it. The blow severs the neck of Grendel's mother and then, in a burst of fury, when Beowulf finds Grendel lying dead on the floor of the cave, he strikes off his head, too. This last blow, delivered as a release of pent-up terror, is very telling, for it is a clear indication that Beowulf is not, in the eyes of the poet, a fearless demigod. He is a mortal man for whom courage is not an absence of fear so much as a suppression of it.

Following Beowulf's return to the surface, the hero is greeted by his fellow Gaets amidst great rejoicing. Then, on return to Heorot, he is subjected to a relatively long formulaic speech by Hrothgar, the Danish king. Hrothgar warns Beowulf not to fall victim to arrogance or to be puffed up by temporary good fortune, because all too soon fire, flood, or the sword will carry him off or old age will surely slay him.

Clearly this speech, with its fairly common Christian homilies, constitutes a certain license taken by the poet who was almost certainly a Christian monk. But it is also an example of the power exemplified and the reverence held for age and kingship. Here Beowulf had saved Hrothgar's people not once but twice, and, yet, it was not at all out of character to permit the old king to provide the young hero with a long, rambling lecture on life and ethics.

This entire episode foretells, in a way, what is to follow, as Beowulf, himself, is transformed over the ensuing fifty years from a young warrior to an old king.

The central event of the second half of the poem is Beowulf's fight with a dragon who has been ravaging the kingdom of the Gaets. In the first fight, the dragon is killed and Beowulf is mortally wounded. This part differs quite significantly from the first in both subject matter and technique. We learn early on that the theft of a cup from the dragon's horde has caused the dragon, after three hundred years of quiet, to emerge from its lair to seek revenge. Beowulf, on learning of the dragon's raids, decides to fight it in singular combat, and orders the making of an iron shield.

Prior to battle, Beowulf delivers his final speech: "Many a battle I survived in youth; yet will I, ancient guardian of the people, pursue the feud, perform mighty deeds if the wicked slayer will venture from his den" (Garmonsway, ll. 2510-15). Compare these heroic words with Tennyson's Ulysses, "Death closes all, but something ere the end, some deed of noble note may yet be done" (Tennyson, "Ulysses").

Beowulf's self-description as "guardian of the people" is significant here. He is torn between his emotional need to recapture his youth in one last, glorious effort of heroic, single combat and his more far reaching duty to stay "behind the front line" and provide leadership to his

people. In any event, Beowulf orders his retainers to withdraw and sets forth to fight the dragon alone, either to conquer or to die.

After some fierce fighting that is reminiscent of Beowulf's two earlier fights, the dragon is slain and Beowulf is mortally wounded. During the extended combat all of Beowulf's retainers save one, the young thane Wiglaf, have fled in terror. Beowulf, in his death throes, speaks to Wiglaf, rejoicing that he has protected his people for so many years and that he has maintained his integrity by never swearing false oaths or killing a kinsman (a recurrent theme in Beowulf's speeches throughout the poem).

Wiglaf sends a messenger to inform the people of Beowulf's death, and the messenger, much in the manner of the Greek chorus, goes beyond his immediate message to prophesy the loss of leadership among the Gaets, the onset of war with the Franks and Swedes, and the ultimate demise of the Gaetish race into poverty, exile, and death. The people then build Beowulf's barrow and sing his final praises:

"They said that of the kings of this world he was the mildest and most compassionate of men, kindest to his people and most eager for glory" (Garmonsway, ll. 3169-70). The final funeral scene is best described by Tennyson who, speaking of King Arthur's death, said, "And on the mere, the wailing died away" (Tennyson, "Idylls of The King").

There is a curious paradox about this second half of the poem. Beowulf goes forth to fight the dragon in the manner which worked so well for him in his heroic youth, straightforward and alone. Yet, he is, at the time of this final combat, an aging king, and a leader who might more wisely have stayed behind to govern his people and send forth a younger warrior to do battle with the dragon. This is the fatal contradiction at the core of the medieval heroic society. The hero follows a code that exalts indomitable will and valor in the individual, but the society requires a king who acts for the common good, not for his own glory. The greater the hero, the more likely his tendency to imprudent action as a king (Leyerle, 1965, p. 89).

Compare, for example, the conduct of the old Danish king, Hrothgar, with that of Beowulf in his old age. Hrothgar, as we have seen, seems to understand the difference between hero and king. Recognizing his own limitations and his own responsibilities, he accepts the relatively colorless tasks involved in the day-to-day governance of the Danes, while calling in the young hero Beowulf to fight his battles for him. Following Beowulf's second victory, Hrothgar warns the hero in rather blunt language of the ease with which pride can grow and flourish in a man given great authority as Beowulf would one day have. Hrothgar warns Beowulf pointedly against overweening pride (in the Old English it is oferhygda doel). The

Greeks, of course, called it hubris and, as we have seen, it is what brought about Creon's downfall).

Now, for a little while your might is at full glory; yet soon it will come to pass that sickness or the sword's edge will strip you of your strength; or it will be the embrace of fire or the surge of flood, or the bight of a blade, or the flight of a spear, or fearsome old age; or else the clear light of your eyes will fade and grow dim; presently it will come about that death shall overpower you, O warrior.

(Garmonsway, ll. 1761-68)

Martial valor, says Hrothgar, is praiseworthy in a hero acting for himself, but a king must not take pride in his strength, especially since time overcomes all men.

Hrothgar sees in Beowulf's behavior in Denmark a tendency to unreflective confidence in his own strength, to impetuosity in action, and to excessive concern for praise; all tendencies which can--and eventually do--bring about Beowulf's death and leave his people leaderless. Hrothgar ruled the Danes for fifty years. When Beowulf's kingdom was attacked by the dragon, Beowulf, too, had reigned for fifty years. But Beowulf does not emulate the long-enduring restraint of the old Danish king, nor does he heed the warning which Hrothgar gave so long ago. Instead he sets forth alone to perform, once again, heroic deeds as he had done in his youth. As the thane Wiglaf says, "The lord and shepherd of our people meant, for our sakes, to achieve

this deed of valor alone, since he, above all other men, had achieved deeds both glorious and rash" (Garmonsway, ll. 2642-46).

As Beowulf strides into battle, the faithful Wiglaf who, alone of all Beowulf's retainers has remained at his lord's side, urges him to protect himself; "O beloved Beowulf, perform your whole task well just as you declared long ago, in the days of your youth, that you would never let your honor dwindle while you were alive. Now, O resolute prince, famous for your deeds, you must defend your life with all your strength; I will aid you" (Garmonsway ll. 2663-68).

A singular hero might never be urged to protect himself--singular heroes generally ignore risk--but Beowulf is a king, and Wiglaf knows that without the leadership of Beowulf on the Gaetish throne, the nation will surely fall into disarray and ultimately fall prey to the Swedes and Franks.

The unnamed messenger who announces the death of Beowulf to the Gaets emphasizes its real significance to them in one of the poem's longest speeches, and it is here we realize that the poet was fully aware of the difference between the consequences of heroes doing battle with fantastic monsters and kings holding together the fabric of a nation in the face of political encroachment. The messenger says,

Our people must now expect a time of strife, once the king's fall becomes openly known far and wide. . . . The Swedish people will come to attack us when they hear that our lord has lost his life--our lord who hoarded his wealth and his kingdom against those who hated him, and after the fall of heroes guarded the bold shield warriors, achieving much good for his people and accomplishing yet further heroic deeds. (Garmonsway ll. 2910-11, 2999-3006)

Here, then, is the poet's dilemma. Heroic society inevitably encouraged a king to act the part of a hero, yet an heroic king, however glorious, was apt to be a mortal threat to a nation. A hero/king's desire for glory becomes an increasingly dangerous motivation as society becomes more complex politically, and a person's responsibility for leadership grows (Leyerle, p. 97). Hrothgar's speech to Beowulf at the center of the poem is a strong caution against headlong, individual action and excessive pride in a king. So, ultimately, it is Hrothgar whose actions better exemplify what must be expected of a wise and prudent leader. Hrothgar, whatever his motivation, disdains personal glory in order to remain at the head of his people. Beowulf, on the other hand, chooses the hero's path and ultimately leaves his nation devoid of his leadership, and rudderless.

Beowulf is a figure of grandeur, then and now the very essence of heroic fiction. The trouble is that the heroic

society of 10th century Britain was unstable. The criteria for the conduct of an individual hero were no longer suitable to the conduct of kings. Beowulf has an abundance of virtues, and his death is the more significant because it arises from a fault inherent in the heroic age. He could not be both a hero and a leader. A leader's unconstrained desire for personal glory is a particular danger to a society because it places the entire society at risk. Achilles was a successful hero who harbored no pretensions about leadership. Odysseus remained heroic despite his abysmal failure as a leader purely because Homer placed no great significance in the responsibilities of leadership. In Beowulf, the two qualities--heroism and leadership--meet head-on but do not blend.

The heroic pride of Beowulf's youth is unsuitable to his maturity, and it brings about a national calamity by leaving the nation without his strong leadership at a most critical point in its history, facing real human enemies far more potent than any dragon.

Thus, the Beowulf poet signaled the beginning of the end of a heroic age which had had its origins in Homeric Greece; the end, itself, would come, as we shall see with the death of another king: Arthur.

King Arthur: The Tragedy of Leadership

The figure of King Arthur appears to have a fairly solid basis in history. Nennius, writing in the 9th century, referred to Arthur as a Celtic chieftain who lived in early 6th century Britain. There is also mention of him in several other medieval works including the Black Book of Carmartheu, a Welsh manuscript of the 12th century. In the Marquis of Bath's manuscript, written in 1428, Arthur is said to have died in 542 after a reign of 22 years (Drabble, 1985, p. 43).

The fictional Arthur is first mentioned at any length by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his Historia Regum Britanniae, composed in 1136. Geoffrey's version of the Arthurian legends was further developed by the 12th century Norman writer Wace, who made first mention of the round table, and by French writers Marie de France and Chretien de Troyes, authors of the 13th century Vulgate prose cycles.

Eventually, other characters--Merlin, Lancelot, Tristram--became associated with Arthur, and Arthur, himself, ceased to be the central character in his own tales, relegated to a mere staging point for the adventures of the various knights. Through the course of the development of the legends, Arthur, once the focal point of the tales, is exceeded in excellence by first Gawain and then Lancelot (Drabble, 1985, p. 44).

The most authoritative version of the tales, and the version on which I have chosen to focus, is Le Morte D'Arthur by Sir Thomas Malory. Not much is known about Malory, himself, except that he was something of a maverick knight, given to violence and lawlessness. Indeed, Malory composed his Mort D'Arthur in prison a few years prior to his death (also in prison) in 1471. The book was first printed by Caxton in 1485.

In order to understand Malory and appreciate the tragedy of leadership portrayed by Malory's King Arthur, it is necessary that we discuss briefly the idea of chivalry. At its simplest, chivalry was the code that governed the actions of the knights who rode out in search of wrongs that they might right--typically in search of ladies who could be rescued from monsters, churls, and evil (non-Arthurian) knights.

The ideal was invented and given a certain local credence in the early 12th century, a period of impressive literary creativity in both France and England. Historically, of course, as a cursory study of the crusades will reveal, there were really no such knights, such ladies, or such a fabulous landscape on which their adventures took place. So, when chivalry was created, it was necessary to call it fiction and to place it, with Arthur, in Britain's dim past. Nevertheless, it remains an example of people's urge to reveal in their fiction the ideal, the way things ought to be. The Camelot of Arthur

has as its counterparts, for example, in the Sherwood Forest of Robin Hood and the plains of the American West. All of these fictions have essentially the same ideal: that of maintaining a semblance of order in an otherwise lawless or corrupt landscape through the efforts of an individual leader who not only fights for the right against an evil world, but contends, as well, with recalcitrance and lack of purpose in his own followers.

Malory's Arthur has two distinct streams which form his character, one from early British history, and one from folklore. All of the characters and all of the rich and diverse tales: King Arthur, Merlin, Lancelot, Tristram Guinever, Morgan Le Fay, the themes of the Round Table, and of the court at Camelot, the search for the Holy Grail, the treachery of Mordred, the fatal last battle at Salisbury Plain, and Arthur's passing to Avalon, along with the implied promise of his return; all of these were a strong part of the traditional folklore of Britain.

What makes Malory's work a classic, as representative of its age as the Homeric epics are of theirs, is that in translating the Arthurian legends into the English of his day, he revealed a consciousness of his identity as an Englishman which would not have been possible prior to the late 15th Century when the three streams of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, and Norman cultures had more or less comfortably merged to form an English nation (Senior, 1981, p. 11).

With the passing of Arthur, Malory effectively closed out the heroic age which Homer began some two thousand years earlier. Arthur is the first fully developed leader in Western literature. From the outset, from the moment he drew the sword, Excalibur, from the stone, he was destined for kingship and, not incidentally, for a level of leadership which would forever separate him from the singular heroes who had theretofore dominated Western literature.

When Malory finished composing his tales of King Arthur, England had been in a state of civil war more or less continuously for fifteen years. It is not surprising that toward the end of his last book, Malory allowed himself a very telling personal comment. Under the guise of describing the defection of the populace to the side of the traitor, Mordred, Malory remarked:

Lo, all ye Englishmen, see ye not what mischief was here? For he was the greatest king and noblest knight of the world and most loved the fellowship of noble knights, and by him they all were upheld; yet these Englishmen could not hold themselves content with him. Lo, such was the old custom and usage of this land, and men say that we of this land have not yet lost that custom. Alas, this is a great default of Englishmen, for nothing may please us for any length of time. (Malory, 1986, p. 731)

I think that Malory, while he may not have known that he was writing about a process called leadership, was nevertheless aware that England was in need of a new and enlightened form of governance, and King Arthur was a symbol of that new spirit. Arthur's role from the beginning had been to represent British national pride. First by fighting the Saxons, then restoring Britain's morale by defeating the Romans and becoming, himself, Emperor, Arthur symbolized the spirit of national resistance (Senior, 1981, p. 19).

So, while Malory's own imagination was caught up in the singular heroics of Lancelot, it is clear that he was quite aware that he had created in Arthur a unique ruler, a ruler who conformed rather remarkably to the modern concept of leadership. Unlike his knights, Arthur did not go out seeking individual combat or personal glory. Rather, he remained at home, engaged in the prosaic tasks of holding his realm together in the face of outrageously egocentric followers, or he went forth, as was the case of his foray against the Roman Emperor Lucius, at the head of his army. Only his final European adventure against Lancelot seems to have been launched for personal--albeit quite understandable--reasons, and it, of course, proved to be Arthur's undoing.

Arthur was a remarkably modern leader. He demonstrated, in his plans for the ultimate fulfillment of Camelot, a splendid vision, and he tried to infuse that

vision into the hearts of his followers. He was, as well, as displayed in his relationships with Lancelot, Gawain, and, certainly, Guinever, a profoundly compassionate and humanistic ruler.

If Arthur failed, it was not because he was not an unqualified leader, but only because Malory, writing at the very end of the heroic age, remained ambivalent about what he wanted Arthur to be, and emotionally uncertain of how to deal with the dichotomy between leadership and heroism. For, Le Mort D'Arthur is, ultimately, a tale of the conflict between heroism and leadership. Malory has created in Arthur a credible, well-developed leader, but has placed him in moral and ethical conflict with an almost perfect hero, Lancelot, and it is rather clear that Malory's emotions lie on the side of Lancelot. Whereas earlier versions of the Arthurian legends were either fantasies irrelevant to life, or were mere moral illustrations, Malory achieved a reality which required no moral standpoint. Yet, his absence of moral judgment does not mean that he had no hero. His dilemma was that he had one too many (Barber, 1986, p. 121).

By placing Lancelot and Arthur together in the same story, Malory created a complex and compelling juxtaposition. Lancelot is a product of the heroic age; a singular hero reminiscent of Beowulf in his youth. Arthur is a leader, not a product of the past, but a harbinger of the future. Clearly, Malory's sympathies are with

Lancelot, and in Le Mort D'Arthur, he has altered the old legends to harmonize with his concept of Lancelot as the ideal knight. But the character of Arthur causes Malory problems because Arthur, a king and leader, will not fit stereotypical heroic forms.

Malory, although dealing with a legendary 6th century king, was writing in the 15th century, a time of great turbulence in England in the waning years of the Wars of the Roses. The patterns of life were shifting, with the rise of an influential merchant class, and the Middle Ages, themselves, were drawing to a close. When Richard III was struck down on Bosworth Field in 1485, it marked, for all practical purposes, the end of the time in which a king would routinely ride forth at the head of his army. The complexities of Malory's world demanded leadership, leadership in something close to the modern sense. Societies could no longer function in the fragmented, laissez faire style of the heroic age. The rigors of logistics, finance, and politics had begun to replace those of singular combat. The leader no longer had the luxury of being a hero.

Malory took this 15th century dilemma and placed it in a 6th century context. His Mort D'Arthur is a watershed, marking the passing of the old order and the emergence of the modern leader. In Lancelot and Arthur, he has created exemplars of both worlds and placed them in a situation so untenable that tragedy becomes an inevitable result.

Because Malory is himself a product of the heroic age, his clear favorite is Lancelot. Despite its title, Le Mort D'Arthur ends, not with Arthur's death, but with Lancelot's. His knight errant's adventures set the character of the entire work. The independent story of Tristram and Iseult parallels and prepares us for the later triangular love of Lancelot, Guinever, and Arthur. Lancelot's relationship with Elaine, the Lily Maid of Astolat and the mother of Galahad, forms a clear prelude to the grail sequence and that signals, in turn, the deterioration of the company of the Round Table which presages the final tragic confrontation between Arthur and his bastard son, Mordred.

Malory describes this final meeting:

There the king got his spear in both hands, and ran toward Sir Mordred crying,

"Traitor, now is thy death day come."

And when Sir Mordred heard Sir Arthur, he ran to him with his sword drawn in his hand. And there King Arthur smote Sir Mordred under his shield, with a foin of his spear, throughout the body more than a fathom. And when Sir Mordred felt that he had his death's wound, he thrust himself with the might that he had up to the bur of King Arthur's spear. And right so he smote his father, King Arthur, with his sword holden in both hands, on the side of the head, that the sword pierced the helmet and the brain pan; and there withal

Sir Mordred fell stark dead to the earth. And the noble King Arthur fell in a swoon to the earth.

(Malory, 1986, p. 737)

Even after this emotional climax, Malory returns to Lancelot for the set piece which ends his work. Lancelot, ridden with guilt over his role in the deterioration of the Round Table and the loss of Camelot, becomes a priest and manages for a year to hold himself together. But in his final days, "Sir Lancelot ever afterward until he was dead ate but little food, nor did he drink much. . . . Always he lay upon the tomb of King Arthur and Queen Guinever, and there was no comfort that the Bishop or Sir Bors or any of his fellows could give him" (Malory, 1986, p. 743).

Finally, on the night of Lancelot's death, the Bishop describes a dream, "Here was Sir Lancelot with me, with more angels than I ever saw of men in one day. And I saw the angels heave up Sir Lancelot to heaven, and the gates of heaven opened before him" (Malory, 1986, p. 748).

So as Malory ends his tale, both king and hero are dead and the order and beauty of Camelot have dissolved into lawlessness and chaos. But neither Lancelot nor Arthur are failures. Lancelot, whose adventures are clearly the primary focus of Le Mort D'Arthur, has been portrayed throughout as the consummate hero. His every act--his first meeting with Arthur, his relationship with Elaine, the grail quest, his infidelity with Guinever, and most certainly his death--are all displayed as singular

enterprises. Lancelot is a loner, brooding, introspective, self-absorbed. He possesses a castle, Joyous Gard, and the lands and vassal knights which go with it, but we learn from Malory very little of his relationship with his retainers, and are never shown Lancelot in a leadership situation. In this sense, there is no difference between Lancelot and his heroic predecessors, Achilles, Odysseus, and Beowulf.

The story of Lancelot, then, is a relatively simple, straightforward heroic tale, set down by Sir Thomas Malory, "the ill-famed knight" (Drabble, 1985, p. 611), himself a vestige of the age of heroes. Lancelot's tragedy--and the greatness of Le Mort D'Arthur--comes as a result of his relationship with Arthur. In Arthur, Malory has taken a legendary hero and, almost without realizing it, created a leader. But Arthur's complexity (and his tragedy) lies in the fact that he must function as a leader in a world of heroes.

Neither Arthur nor Lancelot quite know what to do with each other. They are friends in the true heroic spirit, but they are as incompatible as oil and water. Arthur is a king and a leader who must make laws and see that they are upheld. But Lancelot is a singular hero who, by the very nature of his role, can be subordinate to no one, anymore than Achilles could have allowed himself to be subordinate to Agamemnon.

The magnificence of Malory's work is that he saw the immense tragedy in this dichotomy between his two great protagonists. While his sympathies remained clearly with his singular hero, he understood that his world was on the threshold of a newer order, an order in which the role of the hero would never again be quite the same.

CHAPTER 6

SHAKESPEARE AND THE RENAISSANCE

Coriolanus: The Absence of Leadership

"Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oakleaves,
horse's heels
Over paving.
And the flags, and the trumpets.
And so many eagles. . . .
The first thing to do is to form the committees:
The consultive councils, the standing committees,
select committees and sub-committees."

T.S. Eliot,
Coriolan

Among all Shakespeare's plays, Coriolanus has been among the least frequently performed. The play was not a success in Shakespeare's time, nor is it today. It has been called a bleak tragedy, because it has no moving poetry, no music; there are no lovers, no clowns, no supernatural elements. There is only historical chronicle, violently dramatic, but bone dry. There is, as well, a protagonist of heroic proportions who can rouse all sorts of emotions, but never sympathy (Kott, 1966, p. 180). It would seem as though Shakespeare deliberately excluded imagination and poetry from Coriolanus because he consciously did not wish us to identify with its hero as we tend to do with Hamlet, Lear, and Othello; he wanted us to

remain more or less neutral so that we might judge. And judge we must, for Shakespeare makes no judgments for us. Coriolanus is an exceptionally ambiguous play. It is ambiguous politically, morally, even philosophically. And this sort of ambiguity can be a very difficult thing for an audience to swallow.

Coriolanus, written in 1608, was probably Shakespeare's last drama. The action takes place in the early, half-legendary times of the Roman Republic. The story is briefly described by Livy and expanded upon by Plutarch in his Lives of the Noble Romans. The English version by Sir Thomas North was published in 1579, and it was from this work that Shakespeare took his plot and characters (Drabble, 1985, pp. 229-30).

Rome had been involved in two major struggles, one against the neighboring Volscians, the other an internal conflict between the city's rich and poor. It seems the external wars have made the patricians rich in land and slaves. But they cannot carry on war without the consent of the plebeians who, because Rome is a republic, have gained the right to elect their own tribunes and to participate in the governmental process. The bravest of all the Romans is Caius Marcius, a patrician. Marcius almost single-handedly captures the Volscian town of Corioli, thus earning for himself the surname Coriolanus. He is a great general who has rendered to Rome highly

meritorious service. He has twenty-seven wounds on his body, each one suffered for the cause of Rome.

When the war ends, the patricians nominate Coriolanus for the office of Consul. The nomination must be approved by the people, but Coriolanus is an aristocrat; he despises the people. There is a famine in the city, and Coriolanus objects to the distribution of grain, unless the people renounce their right to elect tribunes. The angry people, accordingly, refuse to endorse Coriolanus' nomination and, furthermore, encouraged by their elected tribunes, they accuse him of plotting against the republic which he has so recently defended on the battlefield. Ultimately, Coriolanus is forced to stand trial and is banished from Rome forever. Bent on revenge, he goes over to the Volscians and proposes to his former enemies a military expedition against Rome with himself in command.

Coriolanus, once more in his element, leads the Volscians to the gates of Rome. The city, effectively rendered leaderless with Coriolanus' banishment, is defenseless and doomed to destruction. Plebeians and patricians each accuse the other of having mishandled the entire Coriolanus affair. They beg for mercy but in vain. Finally, the Romans send forth Coriolanus' mother and wife as envoys. Coriolanus, moved by his mother's eloquence, agrees to conclude peace and withdraws with his Volscian army away from Rome. In making the decision to spare the city, Coriolanus effectively condemns himself to death. By

breaking his pact with the Volscians, he has been a betrayer for the second time, and he is killed by them as a traitor.

Heretofore, in the works we have examined from the classical and medieval periods, the common people have had no role to play. In Homer, and certainly in Beowulf, even the lesser nobles have been dealt with as peripheral characters at best. In Shakespeare's histories--Henry V is a good example--history is shown as it is performed on the apex of the social hierarchy. Only occasionally do plebeians appear, and then they have absolutely no effect on the outcome of events. They react to a sovereign's death, a war, a coup d'etat. They stand in awe of the monumental happenings taking place above them. Even Henry V had to sever his association with his plebeian friends before he could effectively enter the mainstream of history. But in this late drama, Shakespeare has gone back to republican Rome to create a world reflective of his own time, the early 17th century, in which the common people were beginning to influence their own particular destinies. Coriolanus, like so many Shakespearean protagonists, particularly his kings, is crushed by the events of history. But it is not a royal history anymore. It is, instead, a history of class struggle in which the plebeians, as well as the patricians, have an effect on the outcome of events. All of Shakespeare's histories are Renaissance plays which deal with the interaction of nobles

with nobles, but in Coriolanus, perhaps for the first time, the leader is placed in conflict, not against rival heroes nor with monsters from the realm of myth, but against those whom he would lead. In this sense, Coriolanus is a very modern play (Kott, 1966, p. 186).

The first scene of the play opens with the entry of mutinous plebeians. None are given names, but their power is immediately apparent:

First Citizen: You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

Citizens: Resolv'd, resolv'd!

First Citizen: First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people (I, 1, 1-8).

Shakespeare wastes no time. In the very opening sentences of his play, he draws the battle lines. The plebeians are not concerned with monumental events, they are concerned with their bellies.

The leanness that affects us, the object of our misery is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. . . .They. . . .suffer us to famish and their storehouses cramm'd with grain; make edicts or usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily to chain up and restrain the poor. If not the wars eat us up, they will. . . ." (I, 1, 20-23, 83-90).

At this point, the patrician Menenius Agrippa enters. He has been sent by the Senate to calm the rebels. Agrippa admits there is hunger and that there are rich and poor people in the world, but that, says Agrippa, is a judgment of the gods. That is how the world is arranged, and no one can presume to change the eternal order:

For your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth you may as well
Strike at the heaven with your staves
as lift them,
Against the Roman State. . . .

For the dearth,
The gods, not the patricians make it, and
your knees to them (not arms)
must help. (I, 1, 70-78)

Note here that the plebians speak in prose while Agrippa and the rest of the nobles speak in blank verse. Even Shakespeare, it would seem, felt compelled to draw some sort of class distinction. In any case, Agrippa voices a rationale which always worked before. He invokes the gods. In the heroic age, that might have been good enough. One might, after all, rail against the gods, even defy them as Odysseus did, but in the end, the gods remained pretty much in control of things and one ultimately accepted the inevitability of the idea that the events of history pivoted on a grandiose, god-decreed

structure to which the relatively petty concerns of the common people were incidental.

Agrippa is a politician; his argument, however specious, begins to have a calming effect on the mob. But then Caius Marcius enters the scene and we see immediately how out of place he is, away from the battlefield, in this arena of what to him are trivial events.

What's the matter, you dissentious rogues
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?. . . .
What would you have, you curs,
That like nor peace nor war? (I, 1, 169-171).

Marcius is not concerned about the will of the gods. He simply regards the people as animals who, when hungry, will complain about food and when well fed will find something else to complain about. At this point in the play, he has not yet fought the battle that will earn him his heroic surname, but we have seen his like before. He is a warrior who is out of his element. His code is not appreciably different from that about which Sarpedon spoke in The Iliad. Men such as Marcius are absolutely vital to a society in time of war. In time of peace they are an impediment and their very presence in a society has a tendency to perpetuate a warlike state.

Our first impression, then, of the play's protagonist is quite negative. He may be potentially a hero, but he is certainly no leader. He treats the people with a ruthless

disdain. What can Shakespeare have in mind to offer us such an unappealing protagonist, much less pass him off as a tragic hero? The answer comes soon enough as the Volscians attack Rome and Caius Marcius is called upon to save the city. The plebians are helpless, their voices so strong when taking the government to task for lack of grain, now take on the high-pitched whine of fear. Suddenly, the situation changes, Marcius' demeanor, so arrogant when confronting the hungry mob, now seems most appropriate to the task of repelling the enemy.

The Volscies have much corn. Take
these rats thither to gnaw
their garners. (I, 1, 255-256)

Marcius immediately leads the Roman army against the Volscians and presses the enemy back to the walls of their town of Corioli. The first attack on the town fails. Marcius attacks again and, well ahead of his soldiers, enters Corioli single-handed. This is a scene very similar to that in which Henry stands before the walls of Harfleur, but Marcius does not exhort his army to go "once more, into the breach," he simply goes in alone and takes the town. This is a scene which might have been lifted from the pages of The Iliad. Surely there are soldiers on the stage, but Shakespeare is not concerned with soldiers and leadership. He is concerned with showing us a hero, and Marcius is clearly and consciously made to appear heroic. He has the strength and demeanor of Achilles. Aufidius, the Volscian

general, calls him Hector among bragging Romans. Even the style and similes used to describe him are Homeric:

. . . .but with thy grim looks, and
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds
Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble (I, 4, 58-61).

Not only is Marcius incredibly brave, he is selfless. This same man who scorned the hungry mob in the play's opening scene refuses, at battle's end, to accept the tenth part of the booty to which he is entitled, demanding that it be distributed among his soldiers. He is embarrassed by talk of his heroic deeds. But one thing that war has confirmed for Marcius--and quite possibly for Shakespeare's audience--is that he was right all along about the class hierarchy. How miserable seem the plebians who trembled before the battle and, when victory is won, snatch from one another cups, spoons, and soiled rags. The plebians behave in war like rats. They are hardly worth defending. Marcius is a hero, and heroes, unlike leaders, do not fight for the benefit of the people, they fight simply because that is what heroes do.

Caius Marcius, now called Coriolanus because of his great, singular victory, has no particular respect for the people whom he has defended. The patricians want to make him consul, and all he must do according to law is appear at the forum, expose his scars, and formally ask the approval of the citizens. Coriolanus refuses. His

contempt for the people is too great. Eagles do not ask the approval of rats and crows. Coriolanus is still in a state of war, but now his enemy is inside the walls of Rome.

By this point, Shakespeare has clearly drawn the faces of the two opposing elements of the play, and neither face is particularly appealing. On the one hand is Coriolanus, an intractable hero firmly in control amidst the chaos of battle, but lost in the more subtle arena of politics. On the other hand are the plebians cheering and tossing their hats in the air to welcome Coriolanus as the savior of their city, then within hours, tossing those same hats in the air in their rage at his refusal to condescend to them by seeking their approval. This is an entirely new twist on the theme of hero versus villain. Those heroic attributes, strength, courage, steadfastness, which enabled Coriolanus to defeat the Volscians are of dubious value in his struggle with the chameleonic emotions of his own people.

At the urging of the tribunes, the plebians banish Coriolanus from Rome, and his fellow patricians accede to the banishment to avert civil war. Coriolanus, stripped of his nationality, takes refuge in the one thing which the plebians cannot take from him, his own fierce loyalty to the heroic code. If he cannot be a hero in defense of Rome, he will be a hero in its destruction and, so, he offers his services to the Volscians.

Coriolanus and the Volscian general Aufidias embrace, and Aufidias offers half his army to his old enemy. In Aufidias' words, Shakespeare shows us once again the self-justifying nature of the heroic code which has been seen again and again in heroes from Achilles to Beowulf. Each of these two former enemies seems to see and admire himself in the visage of the other, and Aufidias' words take on a sexual passion:

But that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing, more dances my rapt heart,
Than I first my wedded mistress saw,
Bestride my threshold. (IV, 5, 119-22)

Coriolanus has no compunctions about his shift in loyalties. He is as strong and steadfast at the head of the Volscian army as he was when he fought for his native Rome. He is a mercenary, only his pay is not in coin, but in the virtue of the heroic code. Heroism has become an entity in and of itself (Langbaum, 1984, p. 117).

Together, Aufidias and Coriolanus swiftly defeat the Roman resistance and are at the gates of the city. Inside, the Romans, true to form, turn to mutual accusation. The plebians now deny that they wanted Coriolanus banished: "I ever said we were in the wrong when we banished him" (IV, 6, 155-56). They arrest one of the tribunes and threaten to execute him. Plebeians and patricians, alike, approach panic as they scurry about looking for ways to avert

catastrophe. Coriolanus remains steadfast in his desire for revenge.

Emissaries are sent to Coriolanus to beg for mercy, but he rejects every plea. He even scorns the plea of his old mentor, Menenius Agrippa, stating that he has renounced all ties with Rome: "Wife, mother, child, I know not" (V, 2, 83). But this is too extravagant a statement, even for Coriolanus; he underestimates his own humanity. It is a splendid Shakespearean touch that just before Coriolanus' mother, wife, and child enter the stage he renews his pledge to Aufidius to reject all pleas from Rome, then wonders on hearing the sound of new arrivals whether he will have the strength to maintain his resolve, "Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow in the same time 'tis made? I will not" (V, 3, 20-21) (Langbaum, 1984, p. 118).

The next scene is played out almost entirely between Coriolanus and his mother, Volumnia. It turns on Volumnia's accusations that Coriolanus has violated the laws of nature in rejecting country and family. Coriolanus has set out to destroy Rome because its people, in banishing him, have violated the laws of nature. But in the name of those same laws of nature, Coriolanus finds himself condemned by his mother. He is, thus, trapped by his own intractability.

But out affection!

All bond and privilege of nature break!

Let it be virtuous to be obstinate. . . .

I melt and am not
 Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows,
 As if Olympus to a molehill should
 In supplication nod; and my young boy
 Hath an aspect of intercession which
 Great nature cries, "Deny not." (V, 3, 24-26, 28-33)

At this moment, Coriolanus becomes aware of his own hubris. He thought that he was playing the role of avenging hero, but the age of untempered heroism has passed, and he finds that his role is simply that of traitor (Kott, 1966, p. 209-10). Coriolanus has no way to turn; his only option at this point is self-destruction. In order to preserve his own nobility, he must yield to his mother (and to the laws of nature) and spare Rome. But in saving Rome, he must commit his final betrayal. The Volscians, outraged to find their victory over Rome thwarted, murder Coriolanus--as he knew they must.

Coriolanus' death is at once tragic and ironic. It is tragic according to the absolute value system endemic to the world of heroes and heroism, because by the standards of the heroic age, Coriolanus is a fallen hero, defeated--as was Arthur--by an enemy he did not fully understand. In the real world--Shakespeare's 17th century, as well as our modern age--his death is merely ironic, because it changed nothing.

True to the heroic code, Coriolanus' bravery and nobility are eulogized by Aufidius, the man who killed him,

My rage is gone

And I am struck with sorrow, take him up. . . .

Though in this city he

Hath widowed and unchilded many a one,

Which to this hour bewail the injury,

Yet he shall have a noble memory (V, 6, 147-54).

Here is a hero paying tribute to a fallen enemy in just the way that Achilles praised Hector, Odysseus praised the Cyclops, and the Gaets praised Grendel. The tribute is, of course, not to the hero, but to the heroic code. But in Coriolanus this heroic rhetoric falls flat because superlative heroism is not enough. The ambiguities, both political and moral, which were present at the play's outset, still exist. The image of the world is still flawed, contradictions still abound, the plebeians and the patricians are still at odds, and the Volscians are still at the gates. Perhaps a better eulogy of Coriolanus might have been the words of the Roman citizens earlier in the play,

You have deserved nobly of your country

and you have not deserved nobly...

You have been a scourge to

her enemies, you have been a

rod to her friends; you have

not indeed loved the common

people (II, 3, 93-98).

Coriolanus is a modern play about an ancient hero. It

is a play which examines the contradictions of Renaissance humanism by probing the mind of a protagonist who fails despite his unimpeachable heroism. It is, finally, a play about the absence of leadership.

King Henry V: The First Modern Leader

Shakespeare's King Henry V was written in the late spring and summer of 1599. It was first printed in 1600, and appeared in 1623 in the First Folio text based on Shakespeare's original draft (Drabble, 1985, p. 452). Henry V is the fourth and final play of Shakespeare's "Henriad," the first three plays of which are Richard II, and Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2. There is no evidence that Shakespeare planned these four plays as a unit, but they do have a rather remarkable coherence, and they certainly offer that chief quality of the epic: heroic action on a grand scale which ultimately traces the movement of an entire people from one condition to another, usually through the crucible of violence (Kernan, 1970, p. 245). In The Iliad that action involves the wrath of Achilles and the struggle of the Greeks before the gates of Troy, in Beowulf it is the combat of Beowulf, his passage from hero to king, and the ultimate demise of the Gaetish people.

In the "Henriad," Shakespeare describes a remarkably significant and cataclysmic sixteen year period in English history which began with the usurpation of the throne of

Richard II in 1399, and ended with the stunning victory of Henry V at Agincourt in 1415. This brief period saw nothing less than England's passage from the middle ages into the threshold of the Renaissance. In political and social terms it was a movement from feudalism toward the individualism that was inherent in a national state, a movement from an internal to an external focus, an movement from a weak and introspective medieval ruler to a remarkably modern political leader.

As Henry V opens, the Bishop of Ely and the Archbishop of Canterbury are in conversation. They tell us that Parliament has proposed to expropriate church lands, but that the king has not yet decided which way to lean on the issue. Canterbury has offered the king a deal: if Henry will block the bill, the clergy will provide him with a large sum of money to support a possible military expedition to France. Henry, unwilling to commit himself, has asked the Archbishop for rationale defending England's claim to the throne of France.

Ely and Canterbury come before the king to interpret Henry's French claim for him. But before they begin, Henry charges them to speak nothing but the truth, for a war between great nations and the deaths of many men are at stake. Canterbury states that the details of Henry's title to the French throne are "as clear as the summer's sun," then launches into a vague and intricate proof that is a jumble of medieval geography, customs of the primitive

Germans, and the working of the "Salic Law" which involves the prohibition of females from ruling in central Europe. The speech is marvelously obscure and remarkably modern in its tenor. The young king, unimpressed but clearly aware of the necessity for legal justification of his proposed military expedition, asks the Archbishop plainly, "May I with right and conscience make this claim?" He is once more assured and, all hesitation now put aside, Henry casts the die:

Now we are well resolved; and, by God's help
And yours, the noble sinews of our power,
France being ours, we'll bend it to our awe,
Or break it all to pieces. (I, 2, 22-25)

The irony of this scene is palpable. Shakespeare is aware of the very modern necessity for providing legal (and moral) justification for acts of aggression. Canterbury's speech bears little difference from Hitler's justification of the invasion of the Sudetenland or, for that matter, Lyndon Johnson's continuation of the war in Viet Nam. Unlike their primitive progenitors, modern political leaders seem compelled to provide their public with legal, if not moral, justification for their aggressive acts, right or wrong.

It is interesting that, at the very beginning of the play, we see Hal acting both as hero-king and as a Machiavellian politician. This is evidence of Shakespeare's understanding of the fact that in the complex

world of Renaissance Europe, a king must, in fact, be a Machiavellian politician if he wants to be successful.

This same subtle blending of old style heroism with successful political leadership is evident throughout the play. Note, for example, the scene before the gates of Harfleur. Here, Hal has brought his rather ragtag army across the Channel to France. The army is poised before the walls of the town of Harfleur, and there, in the first of his great military speeches, Henry cries,

Once more into the breach, dear friends,

once more

Or close up the wall with our English dead!

In peace there's nothing so becomes a man

As modest stillness and humility;

But when the blast of war blows in our ears,

Then imitate the action of the tiger:

Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood. . . .

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,

Straining upon the start. The game's afoot!

Follow your spirit; and upon this charge

Cry "God for Harry! England and Saint George!"

(III, 21, 1-8, 33-36)

This is the stuff of hero-kings. There is no ambiguity here; Henry is both hero and leader. He displays the same singular prowess as Achilles or Lancelot, yet he does it at the head of his men, and his bravado infuses them with the courage to go forward.

But in another scene just moments later, we are shown a different aspect of the hero-king. Still before the gates of Harfleur, Henry is engaged in parley with the town fathers, trying to convince them to surrender rather than subject themselves to further bloodshed. If the town continues its resistance, he will burn it to the ground. His soldiers, inflamed with the madness of battle, will enter Harfleur, "with conscience wide as hell," to murder, rape, and pillage. "What is it to me," Henry shouts again and again, if these dreadful things happen? What is my responsibility for the crazed soldiers? Henry's "what is it to me," with its implicit answer, "nothing," is rather strange in this context. He is, after all, the army's leader, fully responsible for their actions, and yet he tells the mayor of Harfleur that he cannot control his men. Admittedly, some of this talk is bluff, mere posturing to scare the townspeople into submitting, but it is not all bluff; some of it can be attributed to the uncertainty of control which Henry, whose leadership in battle is still essentially untested, seems to harbor.

Yet another example of Henry's ambiguity is provided in a short scene which comes soon after. Shortly after the surrender of Harfleur, the King rides by his army, and the Welshman, Fluellen, tells him that no one was lost in the battle for the city, but that one Englishman was executed for looting a church. "One Bardolph, if your Majesty know the man: His face is all bubukles and whelks, and knobs

and flames of fire and his lips blow at his nose, and it is like a coal of fire, sometimes blue and sometimes red; but his nose is executed and his fire's out" (III, 6, 102-7).

This same Bardolph is, of course, one of Falstaff's old cronies, introduced to us in Henry IV, and Hal has enjoyed many a pot of ale with him and many a joke at his expense. But the King's only response to Fluellen's news is, "We would have all such offenders so cut off." He then goes on to use the occasion to issue general orders to the army prohibiting looting. This seeming ambivalence in Henry's character is an indication of his growth and of his comprehension of the reality that leadership--leadership in the modern sense-- is not easy, and that the successful leader is constantly engaged in a struggle with self-doubt.

The most telling illustration of Henry's internal anguish takes place on the night before Agincourt. The King covers himself with a borrowed cloak and walks about his camp to speak with his soldiers and provide them with "a little touch of Harry in the night." He comes upon three common soldiers, John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams. These simple men are, without realizing it, dealing with questions which, however fundamental, are a new element in the leader/follower equation. They do not know they are speaking to the King, and their language has an eloquence which contrasts with the pedantry of Ely and Canterbury and, for that matter, with Henry's own heroic rhetoric. They are frightened of dying and worried about

their families. Most of all, they are worried over the fate of their souls. Is their cause just? If not, what becomes of a man's soul when he dies engaged in the killing of other men? How can a man reconcile his duty to his king if it appears to conflict with his duty as a Christian? A very modern dilemma, indeed.

But if the cause be not good, the King himself hath a heavy reckoning to make when all those legs and arms and heads, chopped off in a battle shall form together at the latter day and cry all "We died at such a place!" Some swearing, some crying for a surgeon, some upon their wives left poor behind them, some upon their debts they owe, some upon their children rawly left. I am afeared there are few die well that die in battle; for how can they charitably dispose of anything when blood is their argument? Now, if these men do not die well, it will be a black matter for the King that led them to it; who to disobey were against all proportion of subjection (IV, 1, 138-50).

In this brief scene on the edge of darkness, on the eve of a great battle, the common soldier, Michael Williams, has asked himself and his King a fundamental question of leadership which no one in three thousand years of Western literature ever asked before: What is the nature of the leader's moral and ethical responsibility to his followers? King Henry's response is most telling; it

speaks volumes about the complexities of modern leadership. And, if it is not altogether satisfactory, he may be forgiven, for Shakespeare has handed him a conundrum which continues to plague leadership scholars to this day.

First of all, Henry answers as authority must answer. He says that the King's cause is just and his quarrel honorable, and that therefore the men are absolved of responsibility before God for their acts. Then he continues with a rather curious argument, "the King is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers," presumably because he did not intend for them to die when he brought them to France. Is Henry saying here that he, the leader, has no responsibility for the deaths of his soldiers? He goes on, "Then if they die unprovided, no more is the King guilty of their damnation than he was before guilty of those impieties for which they are now visited. Every subject's duty is the King's, but every subject's soul is his own" (IV, 1, 177-81).

Henry's answer is the answer of a Renaissance king; we are not shown how he feels as a private man because of all Shakespeare's major characters, Henry V may be the most reticent. There is an almost total absence from the play of speeches in which Henry reveals his inner thoughts. He lives in the full glory of public life and even such a normally private activity as wooing a new bride, he must carry out in the full glare of public scrutiny. This is no Hamlet, nor is it even Richard II we are dealing with.

Henry V speaks throughout in a heroic rhetoric which allows no penetration of his most private soul.

We have no choice but to accept Henry as Shakespeare has presented him to us. He is a man who has no private personal self, only a public persona. He is a leader in the Machiavellian sense, unerringly political, always choosing without hesitation the course of action which will make his kingdom function efficiently, balance the divisive powers within, and strengthen his own grasp on the body politic. He is a Renaissance king with a foot planted firmly in the 20th Century. Consider, if you will, the following quotation:

He is a totally political man, clever but not thoughtful, calculative more than inflective. He appears at once sentimental and ruthless. . . . Upon the devices and costs of political manipulation he is capable of looking with some irony, but toward the idea of the manipulation itself and the kind of life it entails he shows no irony whatever (Howe, 1965, p.3).

These lines were written by Irving Howe in 1965 to describe Lyndon Johnson. They work just as well with Henry V, a leader and political manipulator in the very modern sense, who was not adverse to turning his back on old friends or resurrecting obscure statutes such as the "Salic Law," when the overall good of his kingdom was on the line (Kernan, 1970, p. 273).

As the soldiers depart and Henry turns away from the campfire, he pauses to reflect on that same question of leadership which Richard II pondered and which we continue to ponder today: What is a king? For Henry it is a role into which he has been cast and into which he must thrust himself completely, even to the point of the total submergence of his private persona.

Upon the King! Let us our lives our souls,
Our debts, our careful wives,
Our children, and our sins, lay on the King!
We must bear all. O hard conditions,
Twin-born with greatness, subject to the breath
Of every fool, whose sense no more can feel
But his own wringing! What infinite heart's ease
Must kings neglect that private men enjoy!

(IV, 1, 234-41)

Compare these lines with the lament of King Richard II whose reign ended a short sixteen years before Agincourt.

You have but mistook me all this while.
I live with bread like you, feel want,
Taste grief, need friends; subjected thus
How can you say to me I am a king? (Richard II,
III, 2, 174-77).

Shakespeare has called upon two kings, each to examine his own humanity in contrast to the powerful burden of leadership which his role as king demands. Richard II, unable to equate his role of king with his inevitable self-

doubts as a man, ultimately capitulates under the battering of circumstance, hands up his crown, and retreats into his private self. Henry V wrestles with these same self-doubts and, while he does not completely subdue them, keeps them tightly under control. He knows full well that he is a man playing at king, "yet herein will I imitate the sun," but he suppresses his own humanity and casts himself completely into his role of king and leader.

Shakespeare's Henry V has inherited a world of cataclysmic change. In the heroic age, including even the medieval world of King Richard II, society was fairly predictable and life was lived in accordance with the great unchanging patterns of order and hierarchy. God was in his heaven and the people were essentially pawns in a cosmic game over which they exercised little or no control. Kings were kings by divine right; there was little reason for them to question their own humanity because they were, after all, channels for the exercise of the will of God. But Henry's world is suddenly shifting and fluid. Identity is no longer God-given but only a role into which an individual is imprisoned by the necessities and the responsibilities of leadership. Man may no longer confidently lie back and await the will of God. Instead, he faces great vistas of uncertainty over which he may indeed have some control. "What was small and coherent is now vast and tends to fragmentation, what was unchanging is

now in ceaseless flux, what was real is now acted, and what was external and certain is now internalized and ambiguous" (Kernan, 1970, p. 274).

The world of King Henry V is a world of lost innocence. No longer have heroes the luxury of shaking their fists at the heavens and cursing and cajoling the gods. Achilles and Odysseus may have been manipulated by the gods, but at least the gods were there. When Richard II calls to God for help, there is not a whisper of an answer. King Henry V realizes that the age of gods and heroes has come to an end and that mankind in its collective sense has taken center stage. In order to fulfill his role as leader, he understands that he must suppress his individuality and thoroughly absorb himself in the rigors of leadership.

Shakespeare also tells us that the tasks of leadership in the complex Renaissance world have taken on an added dimension, the requirement to bear responsibility for the ethical and moral conduct of one's followers. King Henry never comes directly to grips with this new challenge, but indirectly, through his rhetoric and his actions on the field, he creates a symbiotic leader/follower relationship which Western literature has not seen before.

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers
For he today that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother (IV, 3, 64-66).

When Shakespeare put those words on King Henry's lips, he sowed the seeds for the idea behind the relationship which 20th century scholars would call transformational leadership.

CHAPTER 7

THE MODERN AGE

Billy Budd: The Departure of Heroism

Andrea: Unhappy the land that has no heroes.

Galileo: No, unhappy the land that needs heroes.

Bertholt Brecht,
Galileo

Billy Budd, Sailor was Herman Melville's last creative work, and his only work of fiction between the publication of The Confidence Man in 1857 and his death twenty-four years later. Melville worked on the piece from November, 1888 until April, 1891, and the manuscript was not fully prepared for press when he died the following September. With Billy Budd, Melville recaptured his greatest literary power, essentially lost since the creation of Moby Dick in 1851, and the story theme has an obvious connection with Moby Dick in its classic confrontation of good and evil, darkness and light. But in Billy Budd, Melville no longer voiced the infuriated rebellion of Captain Ahab, rather he expressed a sort of melancholy resignation, an acceptance, perhaps, of the inevitability of evil (Bradley, Beatty, and Long, 1967, pp. 908-911).

The story is about Billy Budd, the personification of the typical handsome sailor of English and American balladry, who, because of his perfect innocence and beauty, is both loved and hated by Claggart, a dark and demon-haunted petty officer. Billy, in his simplicity, cannot understand why Claggart should hate him or why, on a deeper level, evil should desire to destroy good. Claggart, in his frustration with Billy's incorruptibility, concocts a fantastic story of a mutiny supposedly plotted by Billy, and he eventually tells this story to the ship's captain. When confronted with Claggart's accusation, Billy is so shocked that he begins to stutter and, unable to defend himself verbally, he strikes Claggart a fatal blow, there in the very presence of the captain. Captain Vere, who clearly sympathizes with Billy and recognizes his intrinsic innocence, must nevertheless uphold the laws of the Navy and, as a consequence, condemns Billy to be hanged.

Billy Budd, Sailor represents an extraordinary convergence of ageless myth and modern reality. Melville has created in Billy a hero as perfect in form as any Galahad, and, in Claggart, a villain as evil and as complex as Mordred. He has taken this mythic confrontation and placed it in a brief moment in time and a remote and isolated segment of space and allowed it to run its inevitable course. But surrounding this mythic internal conflict is an external world of reality represented by Melville's arbiter, Captain Vere. The outcome of this

peculiar juxtaposition of forces is anything but mythic. Indeed, good and evil clash in a confrontation of heroic proportions, but both are, in the end, diminished in their scope by the overwhelming presence of established laws. In Moby Dick, this same classic confrontation of dark and light was presented in a final turbulent struggle of cosmic proportions in which ultimately Melville destroyed virtually everything he had created. Only Ishmael remained, clinging to Queequeg's coffin; representing, perhaps, a faint hope for the eventual restoration of some sort of equilibrium. But Billy Budd, written forty years later by a Melville beaten down and embittered by a society which refused to acknowledge his genius, ends with only a vague resignation. The novel gives us no reason to believe that this mythic encounter will make a difference, that anything will change socially or that any personal change will take place. It appears that Melville no longer had any illusions that such a classic struggle could alter the world. The Veres would still be in charge, thus allowing the Claggarts their way, and the Billies would surely die (Martin, 1986, p. 107).

In order to understand the role of leadership in Billy Budd, it is necessary to unravel the complex interactions among the novel's three principle actors. It is doubtful that Melville was particularly interested in the leader/follower equation in Billy Budd or, for that matter, aware of its presence. But it is there, not only in a form which

we have witnessed in previous works examined, but there, as well, bearing a wholly new exterior.

Billy Budd, himself, is not a leader. He is, viewed in the light of the works we have heretofore discussed, a classic hero. But, it is his potential as a leader which renders him dangerous to established order and ultimately brings about his demise. Melville depicts Billy in very curious terms. He is, first of all, an innocent, a projection of man's original uncorrupted state. So pure in mind and heart is Billy that he is incapable of speaking disparagingly of anyone: "The will to it and the sinister dexterity were alike wanting. To deal in double meanings and insinuations of any sort was quite foreign to his nature" (Melville, 1962, p .7). And there are constant references to his beauty:

He was young and despite his all but fully developed frame, in aspect looked even younger than he really was, owing to a lingering adolescent expression in the as yet smooth face all but feminine in purity and natural complexion but where, thanks to his seagoing, the lily was quite suppressed and the rose had some ado visibly to flush through the tan.

(Melville, p. 8)

Billy is continuously described in this rather astonishing mixture of boldly heroic and unembarrassedly feminine terms:

He showed, in fact, that humane look of reposeful good nature which the Greek sculptor in some instances gave to his heroic strong Hercules. But this again was subtly modified by another and pervasive quality. The ear, small and shapely, the arch of the foot, the curve in mouth and nostril. . . .but, above all, something in the mobile expression, something suggestive of a mother eminently favored by love and the graces. (Melville, p. 9)

Billy is somehow feminine without being effeminate. In the rough and tumble world of a late 16th century man-of-war, he has no difficulty gaining the respect of the crew. In fact, Billy's relationship with his peers goes far beyond simple respect and approaches adoration:

But they all love him. Some of 'em do his washing, darn his old trousers for him; the carpenter is at odd times making a little chest of drawers for him. Anybody will do anything for Billy Budd.

(Melville, p. 5)

Billy is most likely a manifestation of Melville's homosexuality. However, I do not wish to discuss this aspect of Billy's persona in detail since it would not serve any useful purpose in a study of leadership in literature. But, whatever emphasis Melville may have placed on Billy's homosexual nature, some attention to it in this study is unavoidable, particularly with regard to the tension which develops between Billy and Claggart. Let

it suffice that there is something about Billy that is flawed, something that causes the reader a modicum of uneasiness. He is, perhaps, too perfect, dare I say too Christlike. He is the sort of singular hero who makes the established workaday leaders keep their backs to the wall. He is, for all his passivity, another Antigone and, as we have seen, to a leader who must simply worry about keeping the ship on course and avoiding the storm, such perfection is dangerous.

Let us look now at Claggart. Whereas Billy is a hero of light, Claggart is, in his way, a hero of darkness. He is like Milton's Lucifer. Claggart is the ship's Master-at-Arms, a position described by Melville as a sort of chief of police, responsible primarily for the discipline of the crew.

Claggart was a man about five-and-thirty, somewhat spare and tall, yet of no ill figure upon the whole. His hand was too small and shapely to have been accustomed to hard toil. The face was a notable one, the features, all except the chin clearly cut as those on a Greek medallion. (Melville, p. 20)

Melville goes on to tell us that not much is known of Claggart's background, but that his demeanor is, "so suggestive of an education and career incongruous with his naval function that when not actually engaged in it he looked like a man of high quality, social and moral, who

for reasons of his own was keeping incog" (Melville, p. 20).

Furthermore, we learn from Melville that on the Bellipotent, only Vere and Claggart are "capable of adequately appreciating the moral phenomenon presented in Billy Budd" (Melville, p. 32).

Melville indicated that Claggart had a natural depravity, which he further defined not as an inability to distinguish between good and evil so much as an inability or at least an unwillingness to do anything about the distinction.

Now something such a one was Claggart, in whom was the mania of an evil nature, not engendered by vicious training or corrupting books or licentious living, but born with him and innate, in short, a depravity according to nature. (Melville, p. 30)

For all of his innate evil, Claggart is an immensely complex man. Melville described his depravity in peculiarly contradictory terminology. Claggart, he said, is "without vices or small sins." He is not "mercenary or avaricious," not "sordid or sensual" (Melville, p. 32). He is neither brutish nor violent nor given to strong drink. He flourishes in a civilized environment. Claggart is, in fact, a highly civilized man, whereas Billy is at one point described as an upright barbarian (Dillingham, 1986, p. 388).

The point here is that Billy is a creature of the heroic age set down in a time and place which had no use for singular heroes. Claggart, on the other hand, is a distorted but very real representative of the modern age, fully aware of the threat which Billy presents to Claggart's structured bureaucracy. Claggart senses that Billy is "a mantrap under the ruddy-tipped daisies" (Melville, p. 46).

The confrontation between Billy Budd and John Claggart is a confrontation of mythic proportions and, inevitably, both are destroyed by it. They are destroyed as surely as Beowulf and the dragon were destroyed; as surely as Arthur and Mordred were destroyed. But the difference this time is that in the wake of this heroic conflict, nothing is changed, life goes on as before. The reason for this is that the power of their struggle is ultimately muted by the imposition of a greater reality which surrounds the mythic world of Billy and Claggart.

Melville presented this reality in the form of Captain Vere.

Captain the Honorable Edward Fairfax Vere, to give his full title, was a bachelor of forty or thereabouts, a sailor of distinction even in a time prolific of renowned seamen. . . .He had seen much service, been in various engagements, always acquitting himself as an officer mindful of the welfare of his men, but never tolerating an infraction of discipline;

thoroughly versed in the science of his profession, and intrepid to the verge of temerity, though never injudiciously so. (Melville, p. 16)

Melville goes on to paint a rather clear portrait of a courageous, thoroughly professional and somewhat inflexible officer:

With minds less stored than his and less earnest, some officers of his rank, with whom at times he would necessarily consort found him lacking in the companionable quality, a dry and bookish gentleman as they deemed. Upon any chance withdrawal from their company one would be apt to say to another something like this: "Vere is a noble fellow. . . .But between you and me now, don't you think there is a queer streak of the pedantic running through him? Yes, like the King's yarn in a coil of Navy rope." (Melville, p. 19)

Melville brings his three principal actors together only once. In the telling scene in Vere's cabin, Billy, outraged at Claggart's charge that he is a mutineer, and unable, because of his stutter, to voice a rebuttal, strikes a powerful and fatal blow that drops Claggart to the deck. Compare this combat with an example from the heroic age. Beowulf, a young and flawless prince is brought into a new environment to challenge and subdue Grendel, a monster who is the very epitome of evil.

Beowulf prevails, evil is conquered, the people rejoice and hail Beowulf as hero and savior.

In Melville's powerful confrontation scene, Billy, the young and beautiful "prince," is brought in to an alien world, confronts and ultimately subdues the representative of evil, described by the author as possessing a natural depravity. Once again good triumphs over evil, heroism prevails.

But this is not the heroic age. It is, rather, a modern age in which, insofar as Melville is concerned, individual achievement, good or bad, must be absorbed and suppressed by the overwhelming presence of the state. Thus, Captain Vere who, like it or not, is the true leader in this tale, has really no alternative but to condemn Billy to death. He quickly calls together his "drumhead court" and fully understanding where their sympathies must lie, instructs the members:

"How can we adjudge to summary and shameful death a fellow creature innocent before God, and whom we feel to be so?--Does that state it aright? You sign sad assent. Well, I too feel that, the full force of that. It is Nature. But do these buttons that we wear attest that our allegiance is to Nature? No, to the King. Though the ocean which is inviolate Nature primeval, though this be the element where we move and have our being as sailors, yet as the King's officers lies our duty in a sphere correspondingly natural? So

little is that true, that in receiving our commissions we in the most important regards ceased to be natural free agents. . . . Our vowed responsibility is in this: That however pitilessly that law may operate in any instances, we nevertheless adhere to it and administer it." (Melville, p. 60)

It should be remembered that the action in Billy Budd takes place in 1797 on a British man-of-war, just a few months after the great mutinies at Spithead and the Nore. In those two incidents, the very fabric of the British Navy was severely rent, and the Navy's leaders were asking themselves hard questions about the effectiveness of the old system of harsh and unrelenting discipline. It was a turbulent time. Reforms were clearly in order, but there was no general agreement in the fleet as to how far these reforms could go while still maintaining an effective fighting force. Moreover, the French Revolution was at its height, and neither the British nor other European people had any idea what course the new French Republic would take. These were, in short, the sorts of times which bring out the cautious and conservative aspects of the character of those who are charged with holding together the established order. Therefore, the reasonableness of Vere's judgment that Billy must hang is supported by Melville's portrait of Vere and by our knowledge of the volatile situation that existed in the British Navy in 1797.

Edward Vere, like Creon and Arthur, has an obligation to uphold the laws of the establishment even though the results of his actions may be dangerously unpopular and personally abhorrent. Vere is an intelligent man with a strong sense of justice. It is no accident that Melville has given him a name which is the Latin word for truth. He is undoubtedly aware of the magnitude of the philosophical implications of the conflict between Billy Budd and Claggert, but of more immediate importance is the maintenance of order aboard HMS Bellipotent and the ship's effectiveness as a fighting force. Thus, Vere's agony as a leader is not that he must make a choice between life or death for Billy Budd, but precisely the opposite. His agony is that there is no choice to make. If discipline is to be maintained, Billy must die. All of Vere's actions are directed toward the preservation of order at a time in which his country is at war. Vere's charter is to maintain his crew as an organized fighting force for the protection of the Empire. Moreover, Vere also knows that his crew, however discontented they may be over Billy's fate, are fully reliant upon their captain to provide them with the security that comes of good order and discipline.

The brilliance of Billy Budd as a work of literature is that Vere's dilemma is both mythic and very modern. In Antigone, Sophocles presented a classic conflict between two opposing sides, each with a logical and moral foundation. The inherent tragedy in that sort of conflict

is that there is never a clearly defined right choice; the positions of both sides have merit. This is also the case in Billy Budd, except that now the conflict is taking place in Vere's mind.

Vere has only two immediate alternatives: to spare Billy or to execute him. If Vere were to spare Billy's life, he would, in a sense, be committing an act of heroism by defying the laws of the British Navy and upholding, perhaps, a more basic law: the law of humanity. Such an act of heroism by Vere might ultimately develop into a pattern of leadership if, for example, Vere were to plead Billy's case before a military tribunal and bring about, in the long term, not only Billy's right to live, but also reforms of the harsh and often unjustified British naval code of punishment. This, after all, is what leadership is all about: leaders and followers acting in concert to bring about change.

This, of course, is not what happened. Edward Vere did not have the time to be a visionary. He was master of a British warship, in hostile waters, with a potentially mutinous crew on the foredeck. He had to act quickly to avoid the very real possibility of chaos, and, so, he acted swiftly and, given the unruly mood of the crew and their potential rage over the death of their favorite, he acted heroically. Following the silence attendant upon the drama of Billy's execution, a disturbing murmur arose from the crew.

Being inarticulate, it was dubious in significance further than it seemed to indicate some capricious revulsion of thought or feeling such as mobs ashore are liable to. . . . But ere the murmur had time to wax into clamor it was met by a strategic command, the more telling that it came with abrupt unexpectedness:

"Pipe down the starboard watch, Boatswain, and see that they go."

Shrill as the shriek of a hawk, the silver whistles of the boatswain and his mates pierced that ominous low sound, dissipating it; and yielding to the mechanism of discipline the throng was thinned by one-half. (Melville, p. 73)

In the aftermath of a mythic conflict between combatants of heroic proportions, order is restored, equilibrium is retained, and life aboard the Bellipotent goes on as before, all because leadership has been manifested through the shrill call of a boatswain's pipe.

Billy Budd is quite possibly the best treatise on leadership to be found in modern Western literature. But Herman Melville was not writing a novel about leadership. His intent in Billy Budd was neither to justify nor to criticize Vere's decision to execute Billy, but to seek insight into the modern assumptions that allow the confrontation of human beings with natural evil to issue not in "exaltations of sentiment," but in a sort of

resigned melancholy (Scorza, 1979, p. 147). The difficulty for the modern reader of Billy Budd and the reason that the novel comes across as somewhat abrasive is that Melville asks us to accept the fact that heroes are extinct. This was for Melville, a source of great bitterness because it was a reflection of the pattern of his own life. For Melville, the essential tragedy of the modern age was that ultimately life must concern itself with the lowest common denominator. Thus, modernity denies nature and destroys humankind's opportunity for singular glory.

Billy Budd is a tale of resignation and lost hope. But it is also a superior depiction of the challenges and sacrifices incumbent upon those who would practice leadership in the modern age. Captain Vere might have spared Billy's life and used that bold act as a symbol to effect reform. He was clearly an excellent officer; the sort of man who men listen to and follow. Such an act would, in the long term, have combined the singular heroism necessary to defy established authority with the complex sort of leadership necessary ultimately to spearhead a reform movement within so conservative an organization of the British Navy.

In not making that choice, was Vere a failure as a leader? I do not think so. He was, rather, a leader on a somewhat smaller scale. In executing Billy, Vere lost his opportunity for greatness and, instead, saved the moment. He preserved the security of his ship and crew, and he

upheld the laws of the organization which he had sworn to uphold. I think that what this demonstrates is that there are degrees of leadership, just as there are, I suppose, degrees of heroism. If leadership can take place at various levels within an organizational hierarchy, it follows that it can also be carried out to a degree commensurate with the ability of the leader to achieve success. Vere had but a short time to decide which course to take. He chose to lead his men according to the limitations defined both by his position as captain of the ship and by his own capabilities.

The question which this raises is this: Which is the more effective act of leadership, to strive for greatness beyond one's limitations and to fail, or to succeed on a smaller scale within the limits of one's abilities? I do not choose to debate that issue in this study, but I do know that Edward Vere knew himself and knew his charter. He preserved the stability of his ship at a turbulent time, and that required exemplary leadership and, perhaps, no small measure of heroism as well.

The Glass Bead Game: The Intellectual as Leader

Great men are, for youth, the raisins in the pastry of world history.

Hermann Hesse,
The Glass Bead Game

The Glass Bead Game, Hermann Hesse's last major work, first appeared in print in 1943. It had been a work in

process since at least 1934. Largely on its merits, Hesse was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1946 (Freedman, 1978, p. 383). It is a long, somewhat fragmented novel, originally published in two volumes. It has also been published under the title, Magister Ludi (i.e. Master of the Game).

The Glass Bead Game is, on its surface, a historical study narrated by an anonymous observer in an unidentified but clearly European country, about 500 years in the future. It falls into three main sections. A very lengthy introduction discusses the history, theory, and application of an institution known as the Glass Bead Game. A central narrative tells of the life of the novel's protagonist, one Joseph Knecht, the Master of The Game, whose death has occurred some number of years prior to the generation of the narrator; and, finally, a long appendix which contains the writings of Joseph Knecht: thirteen poems and three fictitious "lives," short biographies composed by Knecht in his student days.

The central narrative of the novel contains twelve chapters devoted to Knecht's life beginning at about age thirteen and proceeding to his death some thirty-five years later. Knecht is a brilliant student and accomplished musician who is earmarked for greatness at an early age and placed on a training track designed to prepare him for a position of leadership at the very highest echelons of the hierarchy of the sequestered, intellectual state of Castalia. The narrator takes us with Knecht through his

early studies at Escholz and Waldzell (schools for the study of the Glass Bead Game). We are introduced to several characters who influence Knecht's life, including Plinio Designori, a good friend who leaves Castalia to return to the outside world at the completion of his studies; Fritz Tegularius, a hyper-intellectual who personifies the core values of the Castalian community; the Old Music Master, Knecht's early mentor, who represents a sort of intellectual and cultural harmony; and Thomas von der Trave (a not so subtle representation of Thomas Mann), a very polished and urbane Magister Ludi whose place Knecht eventually fills.

Following Knecht's early studies, we are taken with him to a Benedictine monastery where, as official ambassador from Castalia, he establishes relations between that spiritual world and his own world of intellect, and learns in the process, basic lessons in history from Pater Jacobus. Upon the death of Thomas von der Trave, Knecht is installed as Magister Ludi, a position he holds for eight years and in which he achieves great renown. After a few years in the office, however, Knecht begins to have grave doubts over the effectiveness of his mission in life; these doubts are reinforced in conversations with his old friend Plinio Designori who has long ago rejoined the outside world. Eventually, Knecht decides to leave Castalia to become a teacher in the world at large. He writes a long letter to the Castalian authorities in justification of his

defection, and departs to the home of Plinio where he intends to become a tutor to his friend's young son, Tito. Only two days later, Knecht accompanies the boy to a mountain lodge and drowns while following Tito in a swim across an icy lake at sunrise.

The Glass Bead Game is a long, complicated novel which deals, on a very basic level, with an intellectual community which has abnegated its responsibility to provide moral leadership, choosing instead to sequester itself from a world in need of its guidance. Hesse wrote his novel in the 1930s, but now, in the 1990s, when music has combined with electronics, philosophy with mathematics, and the visual arts with computers, his Bead Game has become all the more relevant. The name itself, Hesse's narrator assures us, is misleading. True, when it was first invented around 1900 the game was played with beads on an abacus like device. By means of a sort of matrix, the theme could be modified, transposed, set in counterpoint. In other words, it was a form of soundless music which permitted the total abstraction of the intellectual elements of music. Rapidly, the narrator tells us, the exercise outgrew the relatively primitive form of the original abacus, and developed a symbolic sign system of its own; it was no longer played with glass beads on a frame, but it retained its original name. The technique was eventually adopted by scholars of other disciplines beyond music for whom values could be expressed by sets of mathematical notations:

mathematicians, philologists, logicians, visual artists, etc.

At first the techniques of the game were developed independently within the various disciplines, but inevitably it became apparent that cross-references were possible. The abstract notation of a passage of music might, for instance, be identical with an abstract formula for a piece of sculpture or an architectural edifice. Scholars soon created sets of symbols in which it was possible to express graphically the interrelationship of all intellectual disciplines. When this new technique was combined with intellectual meditation on the meaning of the symbols, the Glass Bead Game reached its supreme state. The narrator calls it, "a refined symbolic form of the search for perfection, a sublime alchemy, and approach to the spirit that is unified in itself above all images and quantities, and approach to God" (Hesse, 1970, p. 30).

On a symbolic level, the idea of the game works well today because it can be identified with so many aspects of contemporary thought. There are no exclusive disciplines anymore, and the idea of the Bead Game is to provide an exercise in symbolic logic, to serve as a kind of common ground from which to reflect upon the permanent values that have existed in art and intellectual life over the centuries since humans became sentient.

The trouble with the game, Hesse's narrator goes on to say, is that as it developed, its practitioners became more

and more exclusive. Eventually, it was formalized into rigid hierarchy with an elite governing body, and exclusive schools for the training of initiates. What had begun as a pure aesthetic, intellectual process had, over a period of several hundred years, become a closed community, functioning at a phenomenal level of intellectual creativity, but thoroughly self-serving (Ziolkowski, 1965, p. 293).

The Glass Bead Game deals with three distinct realms: state, religion, and culture. Ironically, while the object of the game itself was to blend like elements of diverse disciplines, the intellectual community of Castalia designed itself to keep these three arenas as separate as possible. Hesse defined state and religion as expressions of political and metaphysical needs which are essentially universal. Culture, on the other hand, is the sum of mankind's intellectual achievements--technical, artistic, literary, scientific--and it varies from age to age, place to place (Ziolkowski, p. 325). In The Glass Bead Game, Joseph Knecht is profoundly influenced by Pater Jacobus, a representative of the church and an authority on religion, and by Plinio Designori, a statesman deeply involved in the affairs of the secular world. Castalia, itself, is a symbolic society, intensely and exclusively dedicated to its own culture, to the virtual exclusion of political or religious concerns. Knecht slowly realizes through his dialogues with Jacobus, Designori, and many others that,

however intellectually vibrant his society is, it is, nevertheless, dying because it has essentially shut itself off from intercourse with the world at large. Thus, he begins to understand that Castalia is not the Utopian ideal which he had supposed, but rather, "a dialectical antithesis to the forces of life that Knecht encounters in the course of his career" (Ziolkowski, p. 301).

Joseph Knecht refers to this emergent understanding as his "awakening." It is for Knecht an existential experiencing of reality in contrast to the abstract view of life as practiced in Castalia. It is for Knecht, nothing short of an epiphany. As Knecht later related:

In the state of awakening one did not penetrate more closely to the core of things, to the truth; one grasped, carried out or suffered only the relationship of one's own self to the momentary state of affairs. One did not discover laws, but made decisions.
(Hesse, p. 351)

In a slow, evolutionary process, Joseph Knecht comes to understand that most of the elite Castalian society live in complete ignorance of the danger inherent in a system which isolates itself from the world at large. His epiphany follows a series of conversations with Pater Jacobus who articulates the suspicions which had hereto been more or less inchoate in Knecht's mind. Jacobus criticizes the illusory nature of an intellectual and aesthetic spirituality that exists without any real

foundation in life. "You treat world history as a mathematician treats mathematics where there are only laws and formulas, but no reality, no good and evil, no yesterday, no tomorrow--only an eternal, flat mathematical present" (Hesse, p. 150).

Jacobus goes on to attack Castalian elitism, without actually attempting to convert Knecht. He is concerned that Castalia has cut itself off from the world. "You don't know what men are like, their bestiality and their likeness unto God. You know only the Castalian--a specialty, a caste, a rare experiment in breeding" (Hesse, p. 170).

Gradually through his conversations with Jacobus, Knecht begins to realize that the greatest gap in his own education and, for that matter, the greatest deficit in the entire concept of the Castalian state is a certain naivete based on a lack of political awareness; a lack of humanism. Eventually, Knecht begins to think of himself no longer as an aesthete dwelling apart in an absolute and timeless realm, but as a part of the dynamics of history. The problem which arises with this understanding is what to do about it.

Knecht's dilemma is focused on an internal struggle between his intellectuality and his sensuality. Hesse called it a struggle between the abstract world of the Glass Bead Game and the existential experience which Knecht encounters when he is beyond the confines of Castalia, in

conversation with Jacobus or Designori. By the end of his eight years as Magister Ludi, Knecht has become increasingly dissatisfied with his own inability to effect internal change in the culture of Castalia. He realizes that the institution is too vast to be changed significantly in his own lifetime, no matter how strenuous his efforts. Further, he understands that all of his efforts have been within the aesthetic province, with no major influence on the outside world because his own worldly experience is so limited. This failure is brought home to Knecht vividly when he sees Plinio Designori again after many years. Plinio had left the province as a youth with the intention of bridging the gap between Castalia and the world at large, of injecting the intellectual spirit of Castalia into the lives of the masses. But he considers himself to have been a failure, and this sense of failure has embittered him toward the inflexibility of Castalia. Life has left its mark on Plinio. His face shows deep lines of character to which Castalians are unaccustomed because their lives are spent in serene contemplation.

When Knecht sees Plinio, he realizes how futile his own attempts at reform have been. Knecht resolves at this point to give up his position in Castalia and to accept the true responsibility of leadership--that of teacher--in the world beyond Castalia. He outlines his reasons for leaving in a letter to the Castalian authorities. Basically they

are two: the dangers of isolated aestheticism and the responsibility of the intellectuals to go forth and teach.

"The average Castalian may regard the man of the world, the non-scholar, without contempt, without envy, without animosity; but he does not regard him as a brother, he does not see in him his employer; nor does he feel in the least responsible for what happens in the world outside." (Hesse, p. 353)

Understanding, finally, that he cannot effect change in Castalia exclusively by working from within its system, Knecht "discards the disengagement of abstraction for the responsibility of action" (Ziolkowski, p. 334). As with his awakening process, he feels unable to keep himself sufficiently remote from the problem to analyze it intellectually. Instead, he plunges into it directly by walking away from Castalia.

Only a few days after leaving Castalia, Knecht, with his young pupil, Tito Designori, sets forth to swim across a cold mountain lake. Unable to keep up with the young boy, and overwhelmed by the icy water, Joseph Knecht drowns just as the sun comes up over the high mountains. It is altogether appropriate that this man whose entire life has taken place inside his own mind, on an almost purely intellectual plane, spends his last moments in an intensely physical environment. Having lived a life of abstraction, Knecht dies in an acutely existential moment.

Joseph Knecht is a modern leader in the truest sense of the word. He recognized the failure of the intellectual community--a failure resulting from elitism and exclusivity--to accept its role of leadership in the modern world. Frustrated by his inability to effect rapid change from within, he shocked his community by leaving it. Thus, by setting an example, he set in motion an initiative which would ultimately bridge the gap among all three disparate societies: intellectual, religious, and secular.

Like Edward Vere, Joseph Knecht had choices. He might have remained in Castalia in a position of power and prestige and simply accepted the status quo, but that course had clearly become unacceptable to Knecht after he had experienced his epiphany. He could have remained a part of the Castalian society and continued to attempt to effect change from within, but he had tried that course of action for the better part of eight years and learned that even from his position of power and authority he was unable to effect significant change in the intransigent intellectual society of Castalia. His third alternative, the one which he ultimately chose, was to leave Castalia and attempt to effect change from the outside.

In walking away from the very society which he had been chosen to lead, did not Knecht abnegate his role as leader? And does this not, therefore, constitute a failure of leadership? Again, as with Edward Vere, I do not think so. I think, instead, that Knecht simply made a choice--no

doubt an agonizing choice--commensurate with his own capabilities and his own understanding of the circumstances.

In the case of Castalia, Knecht perceived that change was impossible from within because the very source of the malady which was besetting Castalian society was the unwillingness of its elitist population to interact on a broad scale with the world beyond its gates. In leaving, Knecht sought to accomplish two things. The first was to set an example. If he, one of the most brilliant men in the entire society, could sacrifice his position and go forth singularly to teach in the outside world, then perhaps other members of the Castalian hierarchy might be shocked into the realization that their mission, too, lay beyond the confines of their city. Knecht's second objective, having relinquished his position of leadership in Castalia, was to seek out new followers in the world at large, followers who would be receptive to the vast amount of knowledge which he wished to share. Knecht's departure from Castalia does not signify a failure of leadership, but a shift in focus. So long as he remained in Castalia, remained a part of the society that he wished to change, he was, in fact, a failure.

Knecht knew himself. He knew that his most powerful asset was his intellect, yet he could not, by force of intellect, convince his peers in Castalian society that they must change in order to survive. Moreover, Knecht

knew that he was not a dynamic, revolutionary sort of leader. He could not, that is, climb on a soap box in the middle of the town square and harangue the citizens to reform. Joseph Knecht was only able to effect change in his society by the shock of his leaving it. His departure from Castalia was surely an act of courage. I think that it was also a splendid act of leadership.

Most of the leaders--and all of the heroes--who have been examined in this study thus far have been men and women of action. Leadership, itself, has been for the most part personified through bold rhetoric and dynamic deeds. However, there is a clear strain of intellect running through the pattern of leadership. Creon, Arthur, Henry V, Edward Vere all functioned, to some extent, within their heads. Joseph Knecht, finally, is a leader who is almost entirely intellectual. He is no impetuous radical thrusting nonnegotiable demands upon the institution or attempting to force his ideas upon it. Rather, he attains through disciplined achievement the highest status in his order and commits himself to action only after thoughtfully assessing all its implications, both for Castalia and himself. Hesse suggests that a revolt can be evolutionary if given the proper, effective leadership.

Castalia, a never-never land of the future, has dramatic parallels with the Eastern Europe of today. Knecht's conviction--that a state ruled without the tempering influence of art and intellect is doomed to

brutishness--reflects a very contemporary circumstance. Whether that separation of the intellectual community with secular society is a result of Castalian elitism or a socialist bureaucracy is irrelevant. What is clear is that it is the responsibility of the intellectuals to bring together those disparate segments of society. Consider the fact that the new president of Czechoslovakia is a playwright; the new leader of Lithuania a professor of music. Thus, the longer we consider The Glass Bead Game, the more we realize that it is not a telescope focused on an imaginary future, but a mirror reflecting a paradigm of present reality.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

We shall not cease from exploration,
And the end of all our exploring,
Will be to arrive where we started,
And know the place for the first time.

T. S. Eliot
Little Gidding

Summary

In this study, I have examined human perceptions of leadership as expressed in the pages of Western literature. The research focused on nine major literary works covering four distinct literary periods. Chronologically, the study covered about 3000 years beginning in Homeric Greece and ending in the mid-twentieth century.

The underlying premise of the study was that literature is a more accurate reflection of the human mind than history or philosophy, because literature is an expression of ideas and aspirations rather than the mere recording of events as they have taken place. Therefore, if we are to understand humankind's perception of leadership, it is necessary to acquire a reasonable understanding of the ways in which the practice of

leadership have been portrayed in human letters over the centuries. With this in mind, my intent was to explore the pages of Western literature to seek out an active, influential pattern of human leadership. I set out with five major objectives, stated as follows:

First, I wanted to determine whether or not the writers of Western literature were consciously aware, as they described the actions of their protagonists, that a leadership process was taking place.

Second, I wished to see if there were any significant points of commonalty among leaders over the centuries. These points would not be limited to character traits, but would also include common societal conditions and specific kinds of relationships which might lend themselves to the emergence of superior leaders.

Third, I wished to study the differences between heroes and leaders. These differences would be from both a 20th century perspective and from the points of view of the selected authors.

Fourth, it was my intent, whenever possible, to trace the character development of a single protagonist to determine whether or not the author was conscious of a maturation process and, in the course of the character's maturation, whether or not his or her leadership skills appeared to develop and improve.

Fifth, I wished to test the validity of my opening statement that leadership is an art form. In order to do

this I would have to determine whether or not the practice of leadership and the skills of the selected leaders were shown to improve substantially in the course of thirty centuries of human learning or whether the course of leadership was not a linear progression, but a cyclical pattern which rose and fell depending upon the nature of the leader and the circumstances under which he or she functioned.

Discussion

The original intent of this study was fairly straightforward. I wished to seek out a conscious thread of leadership beginning with the classical period and extending into contemporary literature. Having found such a pattern, it was my intention to form a comparative interpretation of the ways in which leaders practiced leadership in times past with the way in which they practice it now. I wished, that is, to learn whether or not leaders have changed in the way they do leadership and whether or not the actual process of leadership has changed over the centuries.

As the research progressed, it became increasingly clear that the challenge involved in the formulation of this study would revolve primarily around the concept of cultural change. That is, any understanding of human perceptions of leadership as expressed in literature must

be accompanied by an understanding of the perspective from which that literature is viewed and, most importantly, of the culture within which a given work of literature originated.

Looking first at perspective, this study has revealed no sign of the term leadership regarded as a concept, a discipline to be studied, observed, or commented on. Not one of the eight selected authors, not even the 20th century authors, spoke specifically of the leadership qualities of his or her characters in such terms which show that the authors were aware of a concept called leadership. I was unable to find the word leadership used even once in any of the major works investigated. The noun leader was used from time to time, particularly in Homer, but it was invariably used simply as a title for a warrior whose position placed him at the head of a contingent of soldiers. The verb to lead was also used occasionally (in Homer, Beowulf, and Shakespeare) but, once again, leading was simply what one did when one stood at the head of a body of warriors.

This does not, of course, mean that the leadership process was not taking place, only that the author, from his or her particular perspective, was not aware of it. One of the fascinating things about literature is that it is subject to interpretation. It is perfectly legitimate for a reader to perceive in an author's work elements of character which the author may or may not have intended or

even been aware of. It is also quite valid to interpret, say, a medieval work in terms of 20th century awareness and, thus, discover insights in the work which the author could not possibly have known he was putting there. I have, therefore, had the luxury of being able to consider the chosen protagonists not only from the perspective of their authors, each of whom was writing about a period of history other than his own, but also from my own decidedly 20th century point of view. Accordingly, I have been able to discern patterns of leadership and the development of relationships among leaders and followers which probably were not consciously considered by the authors.

The best example of this difference in perspective is the treatment of King Arthur. From a 20th century point of view, Arthur was practicing something close to transformational leadership. He had a vision for Camelot. He saw a future in which knights, pure of heart and unsullied by corporeal temptations, would ride forth and subdue evil, itself. He wanted, that is, to raise his followers to a higher moral and ethical plane. But Malory, writing in the late 15th century as the age of heroes was drawing to a close, was unaware of a concept of leadership, and so he placed his protagonist in an untenable situation. Arthur failed, not because his vision was skewed or because he was an ineffective leader, but because he was dealing with a world of heroes, a world in which--even for Malory, himself--singular achievement was paramount. This was a

world which was unwilling to adjust to Arthur's enlightened brand of leadership.

Creon is another character whose situation may be better understood and appreciated from a 20th century perspective. He is a man of intellect whose concerns are not the acquisition of singular glory or of a greater measure of personal power, but rather the achievement of a degree of equilibrium for his city in the aftermath of a long and bloody civil war. Sophocles portrayed Creon as a tyrant. He gave us no information concerning the will of the gods or the tenor of emotions of the people of Thebes; he only presented this imperious, rather pragmatic man, determined to uphold the laws of his city in the face of a powerful humanistic appeal from the highly emotional and somewhat self-absorbed Antigone. Creon crushed Antigone, but was, himself, crushed in the process, illustrating perhaps for the first time a theme pervasive throughout Western literature: humankind's need for solid, secure government pitted against its equally pressing need for personal freedom. It is very difficult to sympathize with the character of Creon from any point of view. He is portrayed by Sophocles as a tyrant, intractable and narrow of focus. But it is at least possible, from a 20th century perspective, to appreciate Creon's dilemma and to understand, as perhaps Sophocles did not, that as Creon held together the fabric of his society in a time of

extreme crisis, a leadership process was, indeed, taking place.

Even the character of Odysseus is affected somewhat by perspective. Homer placed Odysseus in a position of leadership, but gave him all the essential characteristics of a hero. Odysseus set out from Troy at the head of a large contingent of warriors and several ships. He arrived in Ithaca after ten years of wandering, with no warriors and no ships. From a modern perspective, he was a spectacular failure as a leader. But Homer, writing in an age of heroes, was not concerned with the leadership process and, so, he did not hold Odysseus accountable for the loss of his men.

Each character in this study was, of course, affected to one degree or another by changes in perspective. Our perspective changes with time, certainly, but it also changes with development in human culture. I think the most important aspect of the cultural evolution of Western people, insofar as our views of leadership are concerned, has been the simultaneous emergence of a conscious concept of leadership and the decline of an appreciation for singular heroics.

In the heroic age, the challenges of leadership may not have been significantly different from those which face leaders today, even though the process, itself, seems to have changed as the world has become infinitely more complex. Surely on the plains of Troy men had to be

motivated to go into battle under difficult conditions and in the face of terrible risk. But Homer was not concerned with that aspect of war because the culture within which he was writing was a warrior culture in which men lived in a constant state of conflict or potential conflict. It was a visceral world, lived almost purely in the present, a world in which leadership in the modern sense may well have taken place, but was left unappreciated by the literature of the times.

Leadership is essentially a cultural phenomenon. As human culture has changed, so has our concept of leadership. Coriolanus was a hero of the ancient mold, with a style not appreciably different from that of Achilles or Odysseus. Yet, by Shakespeare's time, that style was no longer looked upon with favor. By the time of the Renaissance, the world had changed. It was more complex, more attuned to the necessity for the sort of prosaic, unspectacular leadership that gets things done on a day-to-day basis. Coriolanus was a throwback; a warrior, essential in time of conflict but clearly out of place in the mundane world of peace. If one were to lift up Achilles or even Lancelot and place either of them down in Coriolanus' Rome, one would have the same story. The point here is that society was evolving. Shakespeare, writing in the time of the English Renaissance about a Roman time long past, recognized the distinct possibility that heroes were becoming an anachronism. Part of the tragedy of Coriolanus

is that neither the Renaissance society of Shakespeare's time nor our modern culture are altogether comfortable with that realization. We want there to be a place for heroes in the world, even the 20th century world, and are saddened to find that singular heroics are out of place. Like Shakespeare's Roman mob, our modern society has a tendency to vilify its heroes when it has no further use for them.

If there is a pattern that emerges here, it is that the complexion of our culture has changed remarkably over the centuries. Our lives have, therefore, become infinitely more complex and, as such, our need for stability has increased, and with it the necessity that people sacrifice certain personal freedoms for the good of the whole has also increased.

Achilles and Odysseus, were they to be reincarnated and transported to the 20th century, might spark our imagination for a time in the manner of, say, Oliver North. But in the end they would probably become embarrassing. And this is unfortunate because even though, intellectually, humans no longer need their heroes, emotionally we mourn their departure and continue to wrestle with the disturbing paradox that while leadership and heroics appear to be incompatible, there remains, nevertheless, a need for a touch of heroism in modern leaders.

Occasionally literature--and history--produce such a leader. Shakespeare's Henry V and Hesse's Joseph Knecht

were of such a mold, albeit quite different from one another. Henry V was either the last of England's medieval kings or the first of her Renaissance kings. As such, Shakespeare was able to bestow upon Henry all of the necessities for both enlightened leadership and bold heroism, and, because he was Shakespeare, he was able to make it all credible. The action in Henry V took place almost entirely in time of war. So, unlike Coriolanus, Henry was never required to function in a nonheroic, peacetime environment. Nevertheless, there is very little doubt that he had the wherewithal to do so. Henry was not an intellectual, but he was a supreme politician; he was smart. He may also have been the first protagonist who had an awareness of and a compassion for the common people whom he would lead. Further, Henry had no illusions about the divine right of kings. While he was not totally devoid of the arrogance of royalty, he clearly understood that he and he alone was responsible for his own success or failure and, what is more, he had, at least, the beginnings of an understanding that as king he had a moral responsibility to his people. This is Arthur's Camelot with a more practical and realistic application.

The two authors who represent the 20th century approach to leadership come at it from very different perspectives. Melville mourned the extinction of the hero and, finally, resigned himself to the gloomy inevitability of a rather gray world run by those competent but colorless

people whose bureaucratic control of things would pass for leadership. Melville understood the difference between leaders and heroes, but, like most of us, he was saddened by the world's loss of individuality, the world's loss of heroic battles against evil.

As if to answer Melville's pessimism, Hesse presented a different sort of leader. Joseph Knecht, an intellectual of the highest order, agonized for eight years over the fact that although in a position of great authority, he was not leading anyone. Knecht had vision, as well as a most acute awareness of his moral and ethical responsibility as a leader. Yet, he was frustrated by the strict confines of his elitist society. By walking away from Castalia and into the world at large, Joseph Knecht demonstrated that there may be, after all, a point of mutual interdependency between heroism and leadership, a point which had been there all along. In order for Knecht to fulfill himself as a leader, he had to conduct a very quiet act of heroism, he had to take a chance. Knecht did not storm the gates of Castalia, nor enter into mortal combat with its hierarchy. Instead, he very gently, but very firmly surrendered his power and prestige and went out in search of followers who were in need of his particular nurturing brand of leadership. Moreover, his departure had the effect of shocking the Castalian hierarchy into a tempo of reform which Knecht was unable to achieve while he remained inside Castalia's walls.

The point I wish to make here is that the process of leadership has become significantly more complex--and, therefore, more difficult--as the populace, the followers, have assumed a greater voice in the fulfillment of their own destinies. As evidenced by my definition of leadership in Chapter One, I believe that a benevolent ruler can, in time of extreme crisis, elevate the act of governance to such a level that it can be defined as leadership, whether or not there exists an interactive dialogue among the leader and the followers. However, where that interactive process does exist, the job of the leader is rendered significantly more difficult because the leader must temper his or her decisions in light of the expressed desires of the followers. Thus, as civilization has progressed, the leadership process has undergone substantial change.

This change has, of course, been reflective of the continuing changes in human culture over the centuries, and as culture has changed, so have human perceptions of the leadership process. Prior to the late 19th century, I think that most authors equated leadership with governance. Therefore, when conflict arose between the governing authority and the singular hero--an almost universal situation, illustrated time and time again in this study--the authors' sympathies have invariably lain on the side of the hero. This can be demonstrated by the rather startling fact that just about every one of the protagonists in this study who have represented the state--Creon, Beowulf,

Arthur, Coriolanus, Joseph Knecht--ultimately failed in the completion of their tasks.

The leadership process--governance--was, certainly, prior to the Renaissance, simply not valued a great deal by the authors in this study. However, as the heroic age faded into history and the complexities of the modern age began to encroach upon the thoughts of humankind, their appeared in Western literature, beginning with Shakespeare, a clearer appreciation for the rigors and challenges of leadership. Leaders in literature may never capture the human imagination and influence the human spirit in quite the way that singular heroes do, but as human culture evolves beyond the 20th century, it is likely that respect for the leadership process will continue to grow and that that respect will continue to be manifested in the pages of Western literature.

Conclusions

Findings

In the first chapter of this study, I set forth five objectives. These were reiterated in the summary section of this chapter. It is the intent of this section to examine those objectives in light of the research and provide my findings on each of the five areas.

First, I do not think that there was demonstrated, in the nine works considered in this study, a conscious

awareness of a process called leadership. Homer was not really concerned with leadership. Even though there was leadership taking place on the plains of Troy, and even though Odysseus had ample opportunity to demonstrate sound leadership skills, Homer largely ignored the leadership process and, in keeping with the times in which he wrote, devoted his attention to the singular heroics of his protagonists. In Antigone, Sophocles portrayed two kinds of leadership, the solid, courageous, but unimaginative governance of Creon, and the emotional, humanistic and, ultimately, sacrificial example set by Antigone. But Sophocles' emphasis in the play was the classic confrontation between two dramatically opposite arguments. It is doubtful that he was aware that he was also writing about leadership.

A leadership process also took place in the middle ages. Beowulf, after all, governed his people for some fifty years, but the Beowulf poet was clearly concerned only with his protagonist's classic confrontations with evil creatures. Beowulf's decision to risk everything in his final fight with the dragon, surely a failure of leadership from a 20th century perspective, was in all likelihood not perceived that way by the Beowulf poet.

Malory seems to have had an awareness that King Arthur was a different sort of ruler than Western literature had theretofore produced. But upon observing Arthur in juxtaposition with Lancelot, it is fairly clear that Malory

had no conscious concept of Arthur as a leader in any modern sense of the word.

While Shakespeare never discussed the idea of leadership per se, I am tempted to believe that he was aware of a leadership process. It is hard to read the passage in Henry V which describes King Henry's conversation with his soldiers on the eve of battle, without developing a sense that Shakespeare knew that he was writing about an exceptional style of governance, a style that closely approaches the 20th century concept of transformational leadership.

In the modern age, Melville, like his predecessors Sophocles and the Beowulf poet, was writing of a classic confrontation of mythic proportions. So, while leadership may have been taking place on the Bellipotent, it was only a peripheral consideration of Melville's. Hesse, on the other hand, seems to have at least understood that he had created in Joseph Knecht a character who was, himself, conscious of the need for a new kind of role for Castalian society, a role which involved the community's responsibility for leadership among society at large.

My second objective was to seek out points of commonalty among the selected leaders. I found three rather powerful points of commonalty among those protagonists whom I consider to be leaders, only one of which is a character trait, the other two being outside influences. The first influence is the relationship

between the leader and his or her followers. It appears that the degree of leadership demonstrated by the protagonist was somewhat directly proportional to the level of self-governance of the common people. Shakespeare, for example, was able to accord Henry V with a very high degree of leadership skills because, among other things, the English people had begun to attain a fairly high level of self-governance and, consequently, demanded competent, enlightened leadership. Coriolanus failed for essentially the same reason, Shakespeare's Roman mob, however fickle they may have been, placed great demands on their leaders and Coriolanus was incapable of meeting the challenge which the mob presented.

Another powerful influence which was common to the selected leaders was the nature and potency of the gods. As the power of the gods to influence society diminished, the requirement for effective leadership increased.

Finally, there is one character trait which seemed invariably to distinguish leaders from nonleaders, and that was intelligence. Creon, Odysseus, Arthur, Henry V, Edward Vere, Joseph Knecht, all were thinkers. Even authors in the heroic age seemed to understand that, whether or not they called it leadership, one could not long remain at the head of a body of people without a fairly high degree of intelligence.

My third objective was to examine the difference between heroes and leaders. This distinction has been made

repeatedly in previous chapters, so I shall not dwell upon it now, except to say that for the most part, heroes and leaders are not cut from the same cloth. Their respective characteristics are perceived to be so different that almost none of the protagonists were successful at being simultaneously a leader and a hero, nor were any able to make the transition from hero to leader with complete success. Perhaps because of the basic incompatibility between heroics and leadership, the pages of Western literature have not always treated leaders kindly. In those instances where leaders and heroes have been placed in conflict, the leaders have invariably been portrayed in a relatively unfavorable light.

Compare the conflict between Creon and Antigone with that between Captain Vere and Billy Budd. They were remarkably alike. Vere and Creon were men of high intellect, charged with the preservation of their own particular societies. When the equilibrium of those societies was upset by the anomaly of a singular and very sympathetic hero at odds with the law, it became the duty of the leader, however unpopular, to preserve the security of the state, particularly in time of great crisis. Thebes had just emerged from civil war, the voyage of HMS Bellipotent took place only months after the great mutinies at Spithead and the Nore. Neither Creon nor Vere was afforded the luxury of succumbing to his own emotions; each had to preserve the state by suppressing the individual

spirit of the singular hero. This is the dilemma of the leader; it is, as well, our dilemma as witnesses. Intellectually, we know that the leader is doing what must be done, and we understand. But emotionally and viscerally, we do not like it, and invariably we side with the Antigones and the Billys.

Additional examples of the incompatibility between the hero and the leader can be found in our selections from medieval literature. Beowulf was a successful hero who tried to make the transition to leader and, in the end, did not quite make it. In his final act, his combat with the dragon, Beowulf returned to his old heroic form, fought the dragon and died, thus leaving his people leaderless. Compare his actions with the old conservative king of the Danes, Hrothgar, who properly fulfilled his leadership role by calmly remaining at the head of his people while importing a young warrior to fight his demons for him. But with which of these two characters did the sympathies of the Beowulf poet lie? With which of them, for that matter, do our enlightened 20th century sympathies lie? In both cases, they lie quite firmly on the side of Beowulf, the hero.

The fourth objective, the tracing of character development is also most apparent in Beowulf. The poet portrayed his protagonist first in his heroic youth and then as an older and presumably wiser king, leading his people in the midst of a rather enviable level of

prosperity. Beowulf's ultimate reversion back to his heroic posture led to his death and the destruction of the Geats. But before this happens, the poet traced a distinct pattern of developing maturity.

Another prime example of character development in the study is found in King Henry V. Henry's maturation process was almost instantaneous. The day his father died he essentially severed all of his ties with his youth and took on the mantle of kingship, and with it the requisite maturity. But whether the maturation process was gradual or rapid, the message of the authors is clear. In order to practice effective leadership, one must learn to suppress the urge for singular heroism and thoroughly absorb oneself in the rigors of leadership.

The fifth and final objective brings this study full circle. I stated at the outset that leadership, like most art forms, is not something which can improve substantially over time, only human perceptions of leadership change as human culture changes. I went on to say that while leadership was subject to an infinite array of variations, its basic structure ultimately boiled down to the effectiveness of relationships between leaders and followers. That initial premise has proven valid only to a point. It remains true that the leadership process may ultimately be refined down to the effectiveness of the leader/follower relationship, but what must finally be understood is that the complexity of that relationship has

undergone major change commensurate with the increasing complexity of civilized society. Prior to the Renaissance the connectivity among leaders and followers was, with certain notable exceptions, essentially a one way process. The populace had little voice in the process of statecraft, and virtually no control over the daily governance of their own societies. Consequently, governance was, for the most part, a fairly unremarkable process whereby the ruler simply made unilateral decisions, not necessarily without regard for the followers, but certainly without their direct participation. Under those sorts of circumstances, instances of leadership, as determined by 20th century standards, were rather rare. But, as I have pointed out in the preceding chapters, I believe that there were occasions when selfless rulers, in times of grave crisis, rose above the level of mere management or authoritarianism and practiced true leadership. For example, King Arthur by virtue of his vision for Camelot, his compassion for his subjects, and his selfless dedication to the moral and spiritual improvement of his society, was a practitioner of leadership despite the fact that there was clearly no significant interactive process taking place between him and his followers.

So, my fifth and final conclusion is that the course of leadership has been both cyclical and linear. The effectiveness of the leadership process has waxed and waned over the centuries depending upon the intelligence and the

humanitarianism of individual leaders and upon the turbulence of the times. But the leadership process has also progressed and become more difficult and, hence, more challenging as the level of participation by the followers has increased. It seems that as society has progressed, the role of the leader has become infinitely more complex as the level of influence in the leadership process of the followers has increased. In heroic and medieval times, the influence of the followers was slight, and instances of true leadership relatively rare. Since the Renaissance, as the equilibrium among leaders and followers has become more balanced, the challenges facing leaders and the opportunities for the practice of true leadership have increased. As society moves into the 21st century, there is the potential that this linear progression will continue to the point that the populace, the followers, will assume the dominant role in the leadership equation. As that takes place, it will undoubtedly be first reflected in the literature of the times.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this study are relatively simple to set down. First of all, it is new. I do not think that anyone before me has examined the subject of leadership as observed from the point of view of Western literature. Second, the study's flexibility and subjectivity have permitted me to wander rather far afield and, therefore, to

examine topics such as the leadership/heroism relationship and the cyclic versus linear nature of the evolution of leadership over the course of human history. Third, the chronological development of the study has permitted not only a solid comparison of leadership now with leadership in past eras, it has also facilitated the observation of the process of leadership throughout history from a decidedly 20th century viewpoint. The study's major limitation is that it examined only a fraction of the extant literature which deals in one form or another with leadership.

Finally, while the ability to view a wide spectrum of leadership in literature from a 20th century perspective was surely a strength of this study, overlapping perspectives also became one of its limitations. This is because each protagonist could be viewed from three different perspectives; his or her own period of history, the time in which the work was written, and the 20th century view of the researcher. Consequently, there was a tendency occasionally to confuse perspectives by crediting the author--sometimes even the character--with 20th century thinking on the subject of leadership.

Recommendations for Further Study

Every book I read in the course of researching this study yielded the names of two or three other books which should have been included. I will cite just a few of the

major literary works which might be examined in further study on this subject: Virgil's Aeneid; two Icelandic sagas: Nyal's Saga and Laxdalla Saga; Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus and Tamburlaine; perhaps some of the Robin Hood legends; the Irish epic The Tain and the Welsh Mabinogian; one or two more of Melville's shorter pieces, perhaps Bartleby the Scriviner and Benito Cereno; Crane's Red Badge of Courage, Wouk's The Caine Mutiny, and perhaps Camus' The Plague.

I would recommend a more concentrated study in the future. Part of the problem associated with this study was that it was probably too broad. An entire dissertation could be written on leadership in medieval literature, for example, and such a work would provide for an opportunity to do more comparative reading and to develop in the text a more thorough parallel study of nonfictional works written in the same period.

I would also recommend a greater emphasis on the leadership/culture juxtaposition. I have become convinced by this study that human perceptions of leaders and leadership are an entirely cultural phenomenon, and I think that this area of study is ripe for investigation.

Concluding Remarks

This has been an exciting and occasionally frustrating project. The frustration stemmed for the most part from the fact that there were more books, more plays, more poems

left unanalyzed than there were analyzed. The study has left me with an even stronger conviction than I had at the outset, that leadership is an art form and that the study of literature is a unique and very valid method of studying humankind's perceptions of leadership over the centuries. I have, in retrospect, possibly focused too narrowly on the hero/leader relationship. Having said that, I must state, nevertheless, that the pattern of heroes and leaders interacting throughout the course of Western literature was, far and away, the most intriguing aspect of the study.

With that in mind, I will close with one final comment on leadership and heroism, one of the more important lessons to be learned from this study. Although the age of heroes is long past, Melville was wrong in his conviction that heroes are extinct. The art of leadership, particularly in the complex and very public world of the 20th century, demands repeated small acts of heroism each day. In spurning the popular choice, in holding his emotional needs in check, in subjecting himself to the contumely of his subjects if not his gods, Creon performed a small act of leadership which required an enormous amount of courage. Captain Vere had to reach down into his very soul for some hidden reserve of self-control in order to stand on his quarter-deck in full view of his crew while their hero, Billy, swung from a yard-arm. This, too, was a small act of leadership, laced with a quiet dose of courage.

I began this study with the premise that leaders and heroes are different. This is true. But the importance of the study must, finally, be discovery that in every successful leader there is a trace of the existential hero. Joseph Knecht learned this when, in order to reach his full potential as a leader, it became necessary to leave the abstract world of Castalia and step into the here and now of the world outside. Others, Creon, Arthur, Vere, Henry V, perhaps even the wily Odysseus, each had his moment of existential fear when he had inevitably to suppress his individuality, hold his emotional side in check, and make the decision that would best benefit the society which he was chartered to lead. Thus, by having the courage to suppress the heroic aspects of their natures, true leaders perform the ultimate act of heroism.

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